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GMA rival, Adonis
Simpao, gets award for 'courage'

SPORTS / A17

Pacquiao:
Mayweather scared of losing

METRO / A21

Blogger faces
libel charge filed by NBI

WORLD / A24

Obama admits
'mistake' after Republican win

GMA going out with a big bang of ads on ads

By Christian V. Esguerra

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo is not about to go with a whimper.

The Philippine Information Agency (PIA) is coming up an aggres-

GMA GOING, A2

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Friday, January 22, 2010 ★★ Vol. 25 / No. 45

Erap says thanks at Mass; bishop frowns on rerun

By Jeannette I. Andrade and Dona Pazzibugan

AFTER A SLEEPLESS NIGHT, DEPOSED President Joseph Estrada offered a thanksgiving Mass yesterday and announced a rejuvenated campaign for his restoration to the highest post of the land.

"I could not sleep last night. Sobrang tuwa ko (I was too happy)," Estrada said as he walked in the aisle of the Sto. Niño Parish church in Marikaina, Tondo, several minutes late for the scheduled 10 a.m. Mass, amid chants of "Erap."

ERAP, A11

Ivler pistol same gun in Ebarle slay

HARLENE AGUILAR Interpreting "Anak"

FREDDIE AGUILAR "Anak" lyricist, singer

BOUNTY HUNTER Palace Undersecretary Renato Ebarle Sr. (right) and NBI Director Nestor Mantaring hand half of the P1-M bounty to a hooded informant whose tip led to the arrest of fugitive Jason Ivler. Marlene Aguilar claims the informant was her bodyguard for two years named Mark Hawan

NBI: It was the murder weapon

By Jeannette I. Andrade and Nancy C. Carvajal

THE PISTOL FOUND on captured fugitive Jason Ivler on Monday was the same gun used in the Nov. 18 road rage killing of a Malacañang official's son, the National Bureau of Investigation said yesterday.

"It was the murder weapon," Angelito Magno, the chief of the NBI Special Action Unit, told the Inquirer.

According to Magno, a slug recovered from the vehicle of the slain son and namesake of Undersecretary Renato Ebarle Sr. matched test bullets fired from the .45 cal. pistol (serial number MU69102) seized from Ivler.

Magno said a slug and an empty shell found in the house of Ivler's mother in Blue Ridge, Quezon City, where the fugitive was arrested by NBI agents during a raid on Monday also matched the slug recovered from the Ebarle vehicle.

The pistol and an M-16 rifle seized from Ivler—both equipped with silencers—are authorized, Magno said in a press conference at the NBI.

At the same press conference, a teary-eyed Ebarle Sr. handed a masked informant

IVLER, A8

Freddie says he told sis to surrender 'Anak'

By Pschola Concepcion
Entertainment

COULD JASON IVLER BE AN example of the stubborn, wayward son that his uncle, singer-songwriter Freddie Aguilar, portrayed in the classic, world-wide hit song "Anak"?

Aguilar, elder brother of Ivler's mother Marlene Aguilar, is full of remorse at the violent turn of events that, he said, should not have happened.

"I advised my sister Marlene early on that if indeed Jason is innocent of the crime he is being accused of, then we should turn him in," Aguilar told the Inquirer by phone yesterday.

"I even volunteered to get in touch with friends in the media and personally accompany Jason in surrender," he said.

Aguilar said he had no idea where Ivler was at the height of the manhunt, and presumed that his sister would know.

"But she said she herself

FREDDIE, A8

She 'displays exemplary, unconditional love' but ...

By Nikko Dizon

MARLENE AGUILAR MAY take a thousand bullets for her son, as she has declared, but psychologists say a mother should also find a way for her child to take responsibility for his actions.

An objective view of Aguilar's actions would show that "to some degree, her actions were an exemplary, commendable display of unconditional love," according to Randy Dellosa, a clinical psychologist and psychiatrist.

MARLENE, A8

Haiti heartbreaker: 4th Pinoy death

GONE TOO SOON Air Force Sgt. James Arzaoza (left) and Navy Petty Officer Pearly Parungul, both UN peacekeepers, were found dead under the rubble of Christopher Hotel, the UN headquarters in Haiti. They were both working on the second floor.

By Jocelyn R. Uy

LIKE HER FILIPINO COMrades who died in the quake that smashed Haiti, Philippine Air Force Sgt. Junior Arzaoza never called it a day until her boss had left the United Nations building in Port-au-Prince, where she worked as a clerk.

Arzaoza was keeping to her work routine when the killer quake rumbled across Haiti past 9 p.m. on Jan. 12, demolishing Christopher Hotel, where rescue teams found her remains Wednesday afternoon, Armed Forces spokesperson Lt. Col. Romeo Brawner Jr. told reporters yesterday.

A peacekeeper of the UN Stabilization Mission based at the hotel, Arzaoza was the fourth Filipino to have died in the 7.0-

HAITI, A6

HAIL, FAREWELL Outgoing US Ambassador Kristie Kenney receives the sash of the Order of Sikatuna with the rank of Datu that is conferred on her during a farewell call on President Macapagal-Arroyo at the Music Room in Malacañang on Thursday. (See story on Page A4.)

11-yr-old girl dug out alive after 8 days in ruins

PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI—A frightening aftershock that rumbled across Haiti may have dealt a final blow to thousands still buried in the rubble, but eight days of unbroken tales of survival still emerged from the ruins.

"She is truly blessed by the gods," a surgeon working at a field hospital said Wednesday as an 11-year-old girl—without food for more than a week—came back to life after neighbors dug her from the wreck of her house.

"It is truly a miracle, she came back bit by bit," the surgeon, Dominique Jean, said.

The number of the unsaturated

Mesidyl Bahiou Ramos tried to comfort her daughter in a French-run clinic as she struggled against the terror of her dreams, crying out: "Mama is not in the hole, don't leave me mama."

Amid the mass graves, makeshift street clinics and a desperate hunt for aid, rescuers also pulled a tiny infant and several other victims, including children, from the ruins of the flattened Caribbean nation.

But a powerful new aftershock sent thousands of traumatized survivors running through the streets in terror and experts said it may have disrup-

11-YR-OLD, A6

RP general named commander of UN force in Golan Heights

NATALIO ECARMA

By Cynthia D. Balana

A FILIPINO THREE-STAR GENERAL WILL assume command next month of the 1,050-strong UN peacekeeping force in the Golan Heights, a mountainous region in the Middle East which for decades has remained a highly contested territory in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Facing reporters yesterday, Maj. Gen. Natalio Ecarma III said Filipino troops already stationed in the area have won the confidence of foreign commanders for being "compassionate" towards the local population.

Ecarma was formally appointed on Monday by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon as force commander and head of mission for the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in what was once the battleground of the 1967 Six-Day War between Israel and Syria.

The unit is composed of troops from Austria, Canada, Croatia, India, Japan and the Philippines, and includes 75 military observers, 20 international staff members, and 108 local civilians.

"I'm proud of the Philippine contingent and at this point the current commander is very much impressed by the performance of the Filipino soldiers who are there.

RP GENERAL, A11

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

6/49	
2nd	25 6
1st	2 14
3rd	29 30

SUERTRES	
2 p.m.	3 8 3
5 p.m.	1 0 9
9 p.m.	3 9 7

SIX DIGIT	
	4 6 3 7 6 4

6/42 LUZ-MIN-MIN	
	20 21 23 33 36 42
	P3,000,000.00

SUPER OPTO 6/49	
	6 15 25 27 36 45
	P66,118,122.00

MESSAGE TO BUSINESS

Noynoy: No need to be a crony

Senators unhappy but won't kick out Enrile, says Villar

By Michael Lim Ubac and Christine O. Avendaño

SEN. MANUEL VILLAR JR. YESterday denied that he or any member of the Senate minority had hatched a plot to unseat Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, but of the senate's majority members' votes number more "turkeys" with the latter's leadership.

Villar, presidential candidate of the Nacionalista Party and its big remnant from the Senate because of allegedly engineering the ejection of public works funds to benefit his rural constituents, did not name or set into view names in his own private radio station dzMM the senators he said were dissatisfied with the way Enrile was running the upper chamber.

But he admitted that "the votes have been lobbying" and that had been "inadvertently" as a coup plot.

He added, "It's unusual for no lawmaker to talk among ourselves before sessions end. We all to see we have with the president of the Senate."

Impartial Senate president

Villar said he did not want to engage the Senate president in a word war. But the Senate President should be impartial. As head of the Senate, it will look good if he is impartial."

Enrile had accused Villar of masterminding a coup plot and replacing him with Sen. Edgardo Angara in order to prevent the Senate from taking up a committee report that was damaging to the latter. He also charged that Villar was attempting to put his allies in control of the chamber in time for the convening of the presidential elections in May.

The Senate failed twice this week to tackle Committee Report No. 760, which was signed by 13 senators, due to lack of quorum and lack of time.

The report seeks to censure Villar for unethical conduct for allegedly being behind a move to channel funds to have the C-5 extension road financed and to increase the value of his real estate holdings. Senators who signed the report also sought the censure by Villar of DOJ Secretary Raul Gonzalez allegedly guilty of the project.

Succession problem

Asked what essential talked about, Villar said that his colleagues were worried about the succession problem should elections fail in May.

The Vice President, Speaker of the House and Senate President can assume the post of acting President in case of a temporary vacuum in the Office of the President.

All three—President Macapagal-Arroyo, Speaker Prospero Nograles and Enrile—are running in the May elections.

Moreover, the 14th Congress of the House of Representatives will cease to exist on June 30.

Since it is delayed as a continuing collegial body half of the Senate membership, or 12, are in office until 2013. However, Enrile is a retiring one, and four will come to be Senate president by June 30 under the law.

The next Congress will convene in late July.

Because of these conditions, Villar said, times could theoretically be a vacuum of power if elections failed.

"We have been talking about that for a long time. Many are afraid that if there is chaos during elections, no one will replace [President Arroyo]," he said Villar.

"Because the votes of the current Senate president, JPE [Enrile], will expire, he can't succeed [as President]. So therefore [our second vote] is why's reason to censure him is not ensuring yet."

Just intrigues

Also yesterday, Senate Majority Leader Juan Miguel Zubiri said no point of a Senate coup were merely "intrigues" around to "drive a wedge" between Enrile and fellow members of the majority and denied that he is to have the chamber censure Villar in his unofficial behavior.

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MAKATI
MAKATI

By Doreen L. Lorenzo and Abigail L. Ho

YOU DON'T NEED TO BE A crony for your business to prosper under an Aquino administration.

That was the message that Sen. Benigno Aquino III, the frontrunner in candidate preference surveys ahead of next May's elections, brought to local business leaders in his first address before the influential Makati Business Club since he declared his candidacy last September.

Speaking to a standing-room-only crowd, Aquino said: our open-business and pro-market agenda while distancing himself from the methods of the Arroyo administration.

"One not need be a crony to succeed in the field of business," he said to warm applause.

No competition

He said a government under him "will not compete with business... nor use its regulatory powers to extort, intimidate and harass."

Aside from promising a cross-free administration, Aquino also said he would not impose new taxes or increase tax rates, if elected.

His 18-minute talk was interrupted by applause at least seven times, at the end of which, MBC members—the overwhelming majority of whom have voiced support for his candidacy—gave Aquino a standing ovation.

Aquino, 50, a first-term senator and prodemocracy crusader, told the businessmen: three reasons underpinned prerogatives that "focus on the business sector can almost be directly correlated to your chances to be the person that he."

In such a situation, businessmen are forced to form their activities on maximizing rent-taking "in order to retain the favors that they receive in exchange for ruthless that relationship."

"The first forward the wrong kind of competitiveness. While it may work locally, for now, it has not enabled these players to become competitive to the world market, where the rules of the game do not take special relationships into consideration," he said.

No new taxes

Despite facing a burgeoning budget deficit, Aquino said he would refrain from imposing new taxes or increasing tax rates.

To achieve this, his economic team will initially focus on plugging revenue leaks caused by smuggling and tax evasion, and

AQUINO

on the reintroduction of fiscal incentives.

"I strongly believe that we can collect more taxes at the (Bureau of Internal Revenue) and (Customs) duties if the (Bureau of) Customs if we become more serious in curbing and punishing tax evasion and smuggling," he said.

"My stance is to emphasize on economy, is to use where we have lower tax rates enjoyed by all, rather than have some enjoy absolute tax exemptions while we burden the rest of the economy with very high tax rates," he said.

He promised to cut down on questionable tax breaks granted to individual firms and to spread the tax burden more equitably so as to be able to lower the overall tax rate for all companies and individual taxpayers.

Aquino downplayed questions about the composition of his economic team, saying he did not want his advisers and their line-up of economic gurus to be subjected to "harassment" from his rivals or the administration.

Chief economic adviser

However, he pointed to his running mate, Sen. Manuel Roxas, as one of his chief economic advisers who will guide sister policy stability and contribute to an Aquino administration.

Aquino received strong applause for his tax policies. But asked if these economic ones were feasible, Wallace Business Forum president Peter Wallace said it was unwise for Aquino to commit not to implement any new taxes or increase current tax rates.

"I don't think it's wise. For example, the tax on liquor and cigarettes—there's no question that needs to be amended," Wallace said.

"I'm catching the tax readers, he has to cut on example by catching the big crooks and not just going after small fry," he said.

He's no pushover, business execs find

By Abigail L. Ho

CONTRARY TO WHAT MANY MAKE HIM out to be, Sen. Benigno Aquino III does not want to be a pushover, according to some top business executives who found the Liberal Party presidential candidate by our his economic agenda at the Makati Business Club yesterday.

Aquino said he was also there to give business leaders "an opportunity for you to get to know me, to find out the adversaries that I champion, the perspective and philosophies I bring to the equation and some of my proposed solutions to give insight into my inner persona."

He challenged the status quo, in a bid to live up to his reputation as a transformational politician. He promised free and fair competition, with no crony-related business concessions. He even promised not to impose new taxes or increase current tax rates, by focusing instead on arresting tax smugglers and tax evaders.

Packed ballroom

The Manila Peninsula ballroom was packed with around 450 of the country's business luminaries, the biggest attendance registered for one of the group's meetings in years.

Many of the businessmen interviewed after the forum seemed surprised that Aquino actually knew what he was talking about.

"I was impressed with the way he answered the questions. He didn't stammer. He was eloquent. He didn't seem to be the goalkeeper that people are making him out to be. He obviously knows what he was talking about," said Marcel Lopez, chair of the Manila Electric Co.

Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala, of the Philippine Business Bureau, said he was "pleasantly surprised" with the way Aquino answered the questions.

"He showed depth of knowledge and went beyond idle statements. He gave frank, specific answers and he didn't evade questions. I was quite impressed with the way he handled himself," he said.

Philippine Group Chair and CEO Jose Cuisia Jr. marveled at Aquino's confidence and maturity.

Leader's sincerity

"Honesty on the part of a leader is very important. He addressed what the business community wanted addressed. It was a fairly comprehensive speech," Cuisia said.

But Aquino should make sure he puts together a Cabinet that would be able to follow through on his economic agenda, said Cuisia, the central bank governor during the administration of Aquino's mother, former President Corazon Aquino.

Aquino declined to reveal the names of his economic "dream team" although members of the Hyatt 10 group of disaffected and resigned members of the Arroyo Cabinet were prominently in attendance—former Education Secretary Florencio Abad, former Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, and former Trade and Industry Secretary Juan Santos.

Mistahs join call for Ibrado extension

By Jocelyn R. Uy

NOW THE ARMED FORCES OF THE Philippines chief's "mistahs" (classmates) at the Philippine Military Academy are backing calls to extend his term until after the crucial May elections.

Retired police general Leopoldo Bataoil, president of the 1968 Class 1976, yesterday said with Gen. Victor Ibrado at the helm of the military organization, the nation can be assured of a clean and peaceful elections, which shall contribute to the country's stability.

"While the class recognized the right of the administration to appoint the next military chief, it was more convinced than ever that the term of Ibrado, who is set to retire on March 30, would be a more proper move as "continuous revisions are supportive and remedial in his leadership," said Bataoil.

"As president of the PMA class, it is my responsibility to steer the class in support to our comrade who are at the helm of the uniformed service," he said during a press conference yesterday in Pasig City.

He added that he and his classmates were aware of the "enormous responsibility that our mistahs carry especially in this election."

Various groups and senators have supported appeals for Ibrado's term extension amid fears of a repeat of the "Hello Garci" scandal.

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TRIBUTE TO REMONDE

'Faithful and talented public servant'

By TJ Burgonio

FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, PRESS SECRETARY Cerge Remonde had walked the halls of Malacañang in his usual jovial mood. That was why the sight of him lying in a coffin at the Palace yesterday was unbearable for his colleagues and staff.

President Macapagal-Arroyo sent Remonde's remains to an emotional wrapup for the "faithful and talented public servant" who two days before had succumbed to a head attack.

A pall of gloom set in and muffled cries from Remonde's staff and Palace reporters filled the air as his flag-draped coffin was carried into the ceremonial Throne Hall.

"It's very sad to welcome for the last time our dear friend and colleague, the late Press Secretary Cerge Remonde, who passed away last Tuesday at the peak of his second career," said aged Ms Arroyo said in her message.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo presents to Flor Remonde, widow of the late press secretary, The Order of Lakandula with the rank of Bayani during yesterday's ceremony in Malacañang. MARIANNE CRUZ

He deserved it all

"He reached the peak of journalism, he reached the peak of public service as a Cabinet member, and so he deserved it all."

Mr Arroyo confirmed the Order of Lakandula rank, the Filipino equivalent of the Presidential Medal of Merit, for Remonde, lauding his plunge and untold zest in his writing, letter writing, who walked back in his soul also long-eyed.

After the 6 a.m. Mass today, Remonde's body will be flown to Cebu for interment Sunday in his hometown of Argao.

The President extolled Remonde for his virtues as a broadcast journalist, crediting him for his exposure in media and election victories in the Visayas.

"Cerge gave fully of himself for the sake of our country, both in government for the last nine years and in media since he was 18 years old," she said.

As a news colleague, Ms Arroyo recalled how Remonde would work late into and sometimes had over the phone in Cebuano.

"That exposure helped me become friends many people in the Visayas and Mindanao really that I spoke Cebuano and then entertained in our landslide [victories] in 2001, 1998 and 2004 in the Visayas-speaking provinces," she said.

The President said Remonde's optimism was always sought on media-related matters because he was considered a "leader among media leaders."

"I learned early there to take Cerge's opinion into account. And that was carried on not only in my media engagement as president with Cerge friends are," she said.

The President described Remonde as a "person of very wise counsel" and a friend in the word journalist who "brought the journalist's perspective" to Cabinet meetings. With reports from Anna Leah Gonzalez and Alyssa Gutierrez

Muslim holiday declared

By TJ Burgonio

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO has signed a law declaring the observance of Eidul Adha a national holiday.

Republic Act 9849, signed Dec. 11 last year, declares the 10th day of Dul Hijja, the 12th month of the Islamic calendar, as a national holiday for the observance of the Eidul Adha.

Eidul Adha is the 10th day in the month of Hijja or Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia where Muslims pay homage to Abraham's supreme act of sacrifice which signified unshakeable obedience to God.

Eidul Adha, also known as the Feast of Sacrifice or Day of Sacrifice, is observed after the Hajj.

The law is a consolidation of Senate Bill 3283 and House Bill No. 6905, which were both passed in October last year.

Last year, the President issued a proclamation declaring the two-day celebration of Eidul Adha as holidays only in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, and not in the entire country.

An earlier proclamation set the two holidays as unworkable days.

The other regular holidays are New Year's Day, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Eidul Fitr, Bataan and Corregidor Day, Labor Day, Independence Day, National Heroes Day, Bonifacio Day, Christmas Day, and Rizal Day.

The special holidays are the Black Saturday, All Saints Day and the last day of the year, Dec. 31.

GMA, learning from Cerge, taps another newsman

By Christian V. Esguerra

ICONA

BEFORE HIS LEADING communicator died, President Macapagal-Arroyo said Cerge Remonde might her a valuable lesson...news sweetness should come from the ranks of media.

That also had taken the lesson to heart since appointed when she had to quickly drop ranked for a replacement for Remonde who died suddenly on Tuesday after suffering cardiac arrest.

Ms Arroyo's choice is Interior Undersecretary Manolo Ballesteros relative to chief Cerqueto Jalso "Jun" Jalosa Jr.

Sun Star is the new press secretary," the President said expectations over a race back to the Malacañang Press Corps beats. "I learned my lesson from Cerge...it's better to get a press secretary who is a media practitioner."

Acting capacity

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Ichon would assume Remonde's post in "acting" capacity. In the meantime, Comelec "Dodo" Lim-ineza, Philippine Information Agency head, will be officer in charge of the Office of the Press Secretary.

Ichon, 54, brings to the job more than half a century of journalistic experience.

He began his career in 1964 as an editorial assistant at the old Manila Times, steadily rising through the ranks to become foreign affairs reporter then editorial writer.

In 1968, he was promoted to senior editor, a position he held until 1972 when the paper was shuttered with the declaration of martial law. Two years later, he returned to the resurrected Bulletin Today's editorial consultant, then become a full-fledged editor.

He was named editor in chief of the Bulletin in 2003.

"I hope Art will teach with you the way Cerge did," Ms Arroyo told The reporters. "He had always brought like a media mate. He was one of you."

Of all the press secretaries who had served under her, the President said no one could match the extensive journalistic experience of Remonde. He was a long-time Malacañang beat for the former late administration in 1986.

Ms Arroyo recalled with fondness how Remonde always brought a "journalist's perspective" to discussions, especially during Cabinet meetings.

Against martial law

During discussions on the Maguindanao massacre in November, she said Remonde was "very adamant" against the return of the military's recommendation to declare martial law in the province to quell a supposed budding rebellion.

"He was very much against it," she said. "That's how Cerge was. He always took the position of the media."

She said her press secretary was hardly convinced of the need for military rule in the aftermath of the Ampatuan massacre. Remonde—a former political detainee during martial law—fiercely opposed to the military's proposal.

"To his mind, if someone like Bert would be convinced, why wouldn't he?" she said.

And like any true defender of the government, Remonde showed no sense of his value on martial law. In fact, he passionately defended it in subsequent interviews.

Palace honors departing US envoy

IN THE LAST REMAINING DAYS OF HER four-of duty in the Philippines, US Ambassador Kristie Kenney was magnanimous in her appreciation for the Filipino people, saying she was in particular to the late Press Secretary Cerge Remonde.

Kenney yesterday paid a farewell visit to President Macapagal-Arroyo, and was cited by the Order of Lakandula.

"When a huge honor for me to be here in the Philippines...every minute of it. I will cherish Filipinos in my heart wherever I go," the fully-packed office for a meeting with Mr Arroyo.

"It's the people. You can meet Filipinos everywhere in the world but anywhere it. Everyone is a friend. There's a great connection, and I feel the sorrow for the kindness and compassion of the Filipinos to be beyond compare."

Kenney leaves for home on Monday ending a high-profile, three-year tour of duty that saw her flying to different parts of the country to oversee US and development programs, meeting with economic managers, personally handling outbreak response, even attending basketball games and guesting in TV shows.

Of Remonde, who died of sudden heart attack last Tuesday, she said: "It's hard to believe he's not gonna come around the corner any minute and there's hardly."

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Kenney was well-deserving of the Order of Lakandula, which is conferred on diplomats, officials and nationals of foreign states whose service featured, developed and strengthened relations between their countries and the Philippines.

"Ambassador Kenney has been a very good ambassador. She's the only female ambassador who has been on the ground, even in basketball games and TV programs," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

"She was very active. I can imagine that you brought about the appointment of the new executive secretary to the former Secretary of State Colin Powell ... She's really one of a kind," he said.

Kenney said she was accepting the award on behalf of the AUSAID, the aid and development agency of the United States Embassy "who are proud to work here every day to make the lives of our citizens better."

She said she was going back to Washington, D.C. to take care of her 86-year-old mother.

"And my mother is 86 and needs me at home. So I will go home and look after my mother for that six months and depending on how she's doing, I will see what I'll do after that," she said.

She thanked the Malacañang Press Corps for the "kind" treatment of US officials.

"You've been meeting me with wonderful kindness but I see you've been wonderful to all of our official visitors and I appreciate that so deeply—Cabinet ministers, members of the US Congress have all found Malacañang Press Corps, you know, very kind and even and fair-minded to people. I know how hard all of you work everyday to report on very much," she said. TJ Burgonio

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Rotary Manila opens Journalism Awards

NOMINATIONS ARE NOW BEING ACCEPTED for the 2010 Outstanding Awards of the Rotary Club of Manila (ROM), covering works in print and broadcast during the period 2009-2010.

The awards categories are Newspaper of the Year, TV Station of the Year, Radio Station of the Year, Broadcast Journalist of the Year and Opinion Writer of the Year.

A special citation will be given to an outstanding work in the New Social Media or Online Journalism.

The University of the Philippines' College of Mass Communication Foundation, cited as the technical-expert manager of the 2010 ROM Journalism Awards.

Nominations may be sent to the ROM Secretariat Office at 3/F Ampalaya corner Gen. Luna Streets, Ermita, Manila.

The deadline for the submission of entries/nominations is Jan. 31. The awards will be presented in June.

MICE conference in Subic Feb. 4-7

TOURISM LEADERS WORLDwide are expected to attend the Philippine MICE (meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions) Conference to be held at the Subic Bay Exhibition and Convention Center on Feb. 4-7.

Most of them are to discuss the current market situation and the business opportunities for the $200-billion global MICE industry, according to Tourism Undersecretary Ethelynda Ermita, the conference chair.

Organized by the Department of Tourism and its marketing arm, the Philippine Convention and Visitors Corp., the MICE Conference invites top meeting MICE Buyers, a Seller Inside, Educational Tours for MICE Mates, market seminars, business networking, and hot presentations of Subic's conference facilities.

Among the tourism and MICE leaders who will participate in the conference are Gregorio Deocaris, president of the Tourism Congress of the Philippines; Antonio Gil-lo, Mara Cobar (Pearl) Tourism Organization coordinator and former tourism secretary; Ivan Sison Haw (Vibes in Travel) producer and SMT Nathalie Gilo as Cargo; Herbie Sisk (CEO of the International Congress and Convention Association; and Jeff Anthony Wong (Asian Overland Services group managing director), Ted Thebert (Regent Publishers managing director), and Jenny Mendiol (Travel Expert Newsletter editor-in-chief).

For details, call the MICE Conference secretariat (523-9511 to 20) or 525-6416), e-mail phil.MICEconference@yahoo.com, or visit www.philpcvb.gov.ph.

LGUs owe P1.6B in back taxes—BIR

By Raoul W. Dumlao

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL Revenue (BIR) is hounding local government units for unremitted withholding taxes on employee's salaries totaling some P1.65 billion.

Revenue Commissioner Joel L. Tan Torres said the amount was on top of the P1.2 billion unpaid taxes that the BIR is trying to collect from the Makati City government.

The BIR "is looking at (using) properties, filing tax evasion cases" and other legal remedies to collect the shortfalls, Tan Torres said.

In a ruling dated Dec. 16, 2009, the Court of Tax Appeals (CTA) ordered Makati to pay the BIR P1 billion in unpaid local taxes covering 1999 to 2003 and an additional P217.8 million for 2002 to 2004.

The CTA was acting on an appeal by City Hall regarding a protest against the BIR assessment for those years.

Tan Torres said the agency was open to an amicable settlement with Makati, but he added that there was no reason for City Hall to delay payment.

In December, Tan Torres said officials LGUs and state firms that do not remit to the national government the withholding tax of employees may face criminal cases.

He said taxes not remitted from provinces, towns and cities as well as GOCCs and national government agencies run to the "hundreds of millions."

The BIR chief added that the revenue agency may finally resort to file cases in court.

"From our investigations, we know that the checks are ready for installment," Tan Torres said. "All this is needed are the signatures of these officials."

Also, the BIR is serving alternate Brian arrest effects to bridge revenue gaps, citing reports from the Commission on Audit (COA) that show these firms owe the government some P23.16 billion in outstanding tax liabilities.

According to the BIR, unpaid taxes from government-owned and -controlled corporations—including their subsidiaries—totalled a total of P15.26 billion in 2007 and P9.07 billion in 2006.

"We are in the process of verifying those figures," Tan Torres said. "The tax dues may have been paid since the GOCCs reports were issued, but we want to confirm whether these are still unpaid."

He warned heads of government agencies as well as their chief accountants, finance officers and treasurers that they will be held personally liable for the unpaid taxes.

Aussie child sex offender blacklisted

By Jovanie Aning

HEING UP GHOST ABOUT HIS CRIMINAL history was the undoing of this Australian.

Sydney Le Fevre was banned from entering the country by immigration authorities after he admitted that he had been charged with sex offenses in his country.

Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan ordered Le Fevre placed on the immigration bureau's black list on Monday after being informed that the Australian had applied for and been denied a visa by the Philippine Embassy in Australia.

Bureau fugitive-search assistant secretary at the Department of Foreign Affairs, asked Libanan to place Le Fevre in the bureau's "do not admit" list for being an undesirable alien.

According to Villapando, the Australian recently wrote to the Philippine Embassy in Canberra requesting for an entry visa to the Philippines.

In his handwritten letter, Le Fevre disclosed that he was in detention at a correctional prison in Australia's Queensland state, awaiting sentencing on charges of indecent acts toward a child and possession of child pornography.

In his letter, Le Fevre said he wanted to enter the Philippines after his release from prison, visit his fiancée and explore the possibility of putting up a timber export business here.

He asked that the information about visa requirements be sent to his cell at the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Prisons in Sandgate, Queensland.

"Apparently, he doesn't know that despite our vaunted Filipino hospitality, foreigners who have criminal record are not welcome in our country," said Fitz-Hudson Jr., the bureau's spokesperson.

Bataic pointed out that the immigration act specifically provides for the exclusion or deportation of foreigners who have been convicted of crimes involving moral turpitude.

"No immigration agency in any country in the world will issue a visa to a foreigner accused of committing immoral acts, especially against children," he said.

Korean firm to put $300M in bioethanol plant in Clark

By Ria T. Dimanalo

A SOUTH KOREAN FIRM IS INVESTING P300 million to put up what may be the largest bioethanol facility in Asia capable of generating its own power supply.

According to the Department of Agriculture's investment arm, the Philippine Agribusiness Development and Commercial Corp. (PADCC), the sugarcane-fed bioethanol plant to be built in Clark will have a capacity to produce 150 million liters a year.

"It is effectively the biggest (bioethanol plant) in the country (and) possibly in Asia," PADCC president Mario Aglipay told reporters. "It will be comparable to the ones in Brazil."

Agriculture officials refused to reveal the name of the Korean company saying that the foreigners preferred to maintain a low profile at this stage of the facility's development.

The plant in Clark is set to be commissioned in 2012. It will have a power generation component capable of supplying 40 megawatts to other consumers, including the Clark economic zone.

Local partner

A local partner, Central Luzon Bioenergy Corp., will manage the agricultural side of production. It will oversee a total of 20,000 hectares of sugarcane fields in Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, and Tarlac.

The sugarcane will be used as feedstock for the bioethanol plant in Clark.

Earlier, the government required oil companies to produce gasoline products with a 5% percent ethanol blend. This means that the Philippines will require 219 million liters of ethanol this year, according to National Biofuels Board (NBB) chair Rafael Coscolluela.

Because local ethanol production remains low, the Philippines may have to import bulk of its ethanol requirements from Brazil this year.

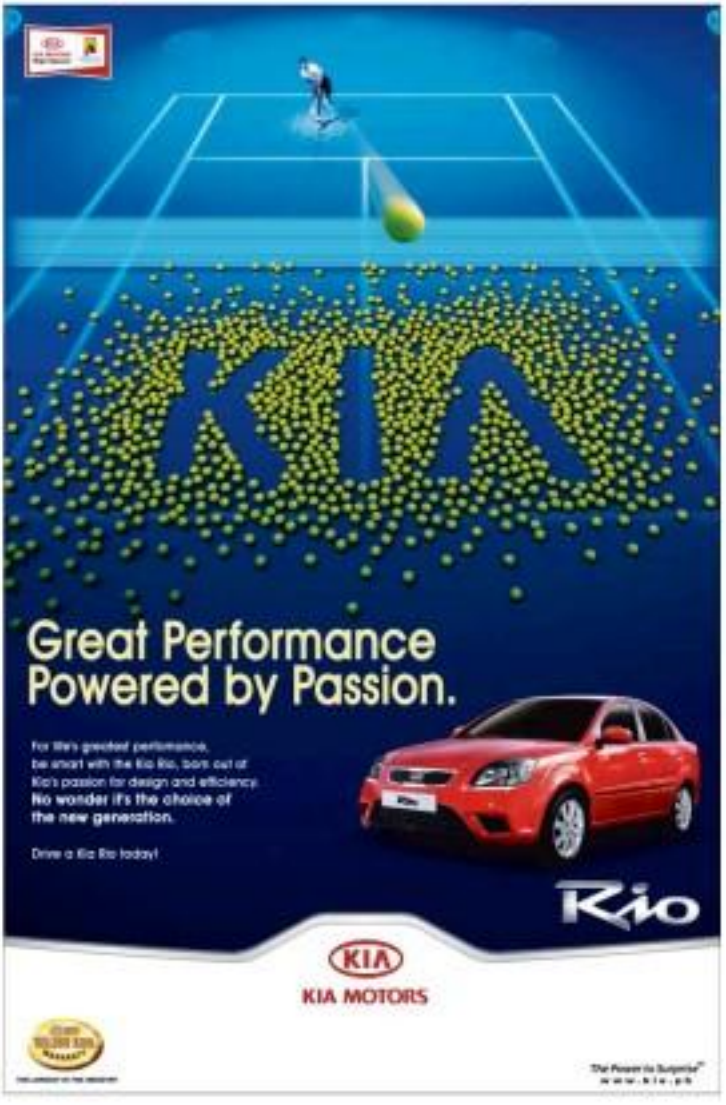
The ethanol content in gasoline products will be raised to 10 percent in 2011. As a result, local ethanol requirements will rise to 461 million liters by 2013, and to 536 million liters in 2014, according to government estimates.

By raising the ethanol content in gasoline products, the government hopes to reduce the country's dependence on imported oil.

PADCC helps local and foreign investors find land for agribusiness investments.

The NBB, meanwhile, mandates how much ethanol companies can import to ensure that local requirements for bioethanol are met.

Aglipay said that, so far, existing local producers such as San Carlos Bioenergy Inc. produce only 96 million liters of bioethanol a year.



11-yr-old girl dug out alive after 8 days in ruins

From page A1

used remaining hope for others still trapped by rubble in the nation's 3rd, 12 terrible.

They said any survivors who had held out for eight days in an earthquake zone should brings received by rescuers deluged by broken day's unexpectable 8 quake.

"For some, it will be the last blow," says the grim assessment of Philippe Dubedo, a French rescue worker expert adviser.

"We will soon reach the outer limits of hope. Any survivors will be exceptional. In some respects, it will be a miracle," he told Agence France-Presse.

Rescue hero say their non-dying earthquake survivors in the first hours are couple of days a ritual.

'Golden 48'

Some experts talk about the "Golden 48," or the need to act with extreme urgency in the first 48 hours after a quake.

Even so, encouraging people at a much later stage is not uncommon.

"Structural collapse from earthquake generate trapped victims who infrequently stay survive for five to six days," says a study published in 2006 in the journal Prehospital and Disaster Medicine that looked at the aftermath of 34 quakes from 1985-2004.

"Under special, ideal conditions, survival may extend to two weeks."

MIRACLES: A young earthquake survivor is carried out from the rubble by rescuers in Port-au-Prince in this video grab on Sunday. A core earthquake-hardest shook the Associated Press capital Port-au-Prince early on Jan. 20, rattling already wrecked buildings and triggering panic among workers of hot week's devastating quake. AP/File

Long-term survival is determined by a basket of factors.

They include the underlying health of the individual, the type and severity of any injuries and access to food or water.

Filipino record-holder

"What causes the survivor's condition to worsen very swiftly are open wounds, which become infected and breed the risk of bloodpoisoning, and eventually the lack of food and especially water," said Jean-Louis Ritman, a physiologist.

Rescuers combing the rubble-filled streets of Haiti's capital Port-au-Prince have several success stories.

Among documented cases of survival from other disasters are two brothers trapped by an earthquake in Taiwan in 1999, who held out for 130 hours—five and a half days—by sipping rainwater that dripped into their tiny refuge and by eating urine applied using to a refrigerator.

And in 2003, a 97-year-old woman survived nine days after the first earthquake in Iran thanks to food that had been next to her before the quake imprisoned.

The confirmed record-breaker is a 27-year-old Filipino, Robito Dyrdek was hauled from the wreckage of the Hyatt Terrace Hotel in Baguio City in the Philippines in 2990 after being entombed for 34 days.

Rescuers, again, was Jay's curse.

Dy said after his rescue that he drank rainwater that seeped through the rubble. He also said the water was "mixed with human blood."

Mental factor

Most people survive in pockets if the building is made of reinforced concrete, steel or well-constructed wood-or-lumber, according to rescuers.

When those buildings fall, they usually collapse in a pattern that creates "void spaces" that can overwhelm survivors.

Indeed, architects are required to include the possibility of void spaces in countries in a seismic zone that have a strong—and increasingly tough—anti-earthquake construction code.

Buildings made of bricks, stones, adobe or—as in Haiti—mud, the case in Haiti—house blocks without reinforcement only tend to collapse completely, so there is always the possibility of a void space.

A victim's state of mind or overall resilience can also shape the outcome, said Rodolfo of Inservisure Juan Fernández (Swanson, Wallace Rodolfo), an NGO gathering emergency specialists.

A baby or child who plainly accepts that it is trapped may have a better chance than an adult who panics, which accelerates dehydration, Rodolfo said.

Search goes on

The biggest aftershock set off the Haiti quake struck in Jamaica on Wednesday with many still dogs.

"God wants to destroy all Haitians because they are bad. Because they are cursed," Dieuke Joseph, a shell-shocked resident of Port, told AFP.

There were no reports of anyone being killed or wounded by the aftershock, but some severely damaged buildings came tumbling down, including the last surviving wall of the main cathedral.

SEARCH FOR HAITI: A Haitian rescuer waits for customers in Port-au-Prince after the country was shattered by a massive 7.0-magnitude quake. A powerful new earthquake rocked Haiti's capital Port-au-Prince on Wednesday, sending thousands of already traumatized survivors running through the streets, screaming in terror. AP

Despite the latest threat, rescuers kept up their search.

A fertile of scene vessels, meanwhile, converged on Port-au-Prince harbor to help fill gaps in still-lagging global efforts to deliver many food and medical help.

The death toll was estimated at 200,000, according to Haitian government figures released by the European Commission, with 80,000 feared in mass graves. The commission raised its estimate of homeless to 3 million, from 1.5 million, and 250,000 people need relief urgent aid.

Bay survivors

With search dogs and detectors gone, ID and relief rescue money worked now the night in hopes of finding buried survivors. But hopes were dimming.

"It's like trying to find a needle in a haystack, and each day the needles are disappearing," said Jeremy Tolbert, Fat Boy Los Angeles County rescue team.

One of those rescued was a 9-year-old boy found in the wreckage of his home. Family members working to recover a body said they heard a voice saying, "Dolores, I'm here."

The boy was dehydrated, drinking four bottles of water and two juices, but otherwise unharmed. *AFP, AP with a report from Inquirer Research*

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'Bravery was in her blood'

By Marian P. Cinco
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LAS PIÑAS, LAGUNA—FOR Systmers Ancestra, 49, father of Sgt. Jance Ancestra, the fourth Filipino pulled from the rubble in Haiti, his youngest daughter was the smoothed and bravest among his seven children.

He said when Jance flew to Haiti for a six-month stint in the Armed Forces, his daughter was mostly still and stood her ground in the face of danger.

Ancestra is her military name.

"She would ask us how we were doing here and tell us to take care of ourselves. And we would tell her the same," the father said in the phone.

Like her other siblings, Jance never failed to support her parents, sources said. Both the girl and wife have retired from their jobs.

"She never forgot," he added.

Like her grandpa

Ancestra said Jance was inspired to join the Army by a friend she met in a Tesda (Technical Education and Skills Development Authority) training course.

"She really is brave, other wise she would have not joined the Army," he said.

Ancestra said his daughter might have inherited the quality from her grandfather, who was also once a military man.

Thoughts of marriage

He said her daughter turned 30 last Dec. 21 but she was already in Haiti and had to spend her birthday and the holidays away from the family for the first time.

Ancestra's longtime boyfriend, Brian Lugtu, who is also in the Armed Forces but is assigned in Davao City, is reportedly also closely watching.

"I believe they had been talking about getting married," he said.

Upon hearing the news of the earthquake, Ancestra said his blood pressure went up.

"The family has accepted that it happened, but it is still painful," he said. He soon almost breaking.

The family plans to have a one-night wake for Jance at the Villamor Air Base. He said they would have her remains transported to Guinobatan, Albay.

"What happened is the reality and I don't I am very proud of her," he said.

Haiti heartbreaker: 4th Pinoy death

From page A1

impatiently outside.

Two other Filipinos—Grace Tetiaa and Geraldine Liduan—have yet to be accounted for. They were working at the Caribbean Supermarket, which was also flattened by the earthquake.

Ancestra's body was received past 1:20 p.m. Wednesday (Manila time). The coffin was ordered to the 407th Wednesday night by the head of the Philippine contingent, Lt. Col. Lojo Dupoy.

The remains of Ancestra's comrades, Petty Duke Protection 2 Randy Palanpan and Army Sgt. Francis Bermudez Jr., were received on Tuesday from the rubble of what could be the second floor of the hotel.

Another Filipino, Jerome Yap, an executive assistant at the IDI mission, also died in the earthquake. His body was recovered from the hotel wreckage on Monday night.

The three Filipino peacekeepers were working as clerks for various UN offices on the second floor of Christopher Hotel.

Assigned as the chief of staff of the UN Civil Support, Ancestra always made sure that her supervisor had left the building before logging out (Bermudez, Ancestra said).

"They were really hardworking ... they intend to be the last to leave the building. That was the case when the earthquake occurred," Ancestra said, relaying Dupoy's account as to why they were still in the building when the quake struck post office hours.

Some of the survivors in had just left the building or were already out to the parking lot when the quake struck, he added.

"They are real heroes who unfortunately made the ultimate sacrifice while sharing the commitment of the nation to international and humanitarian security," Ancestra said.

Ancestra said the military would give them a hero's welcome when their bodies arrive most likely next week.

AFP troops carry on

Dupoy also reported that 158 rescue teams had pulled out from the collapsed supermarket where Tetiaa and Liduan worked, to transfer to other area where signs of life were most obvious.

But Filipino troops continued to search for Tetiaa and Liduan, both believed still trapped in the rubble. They were also using large front pointer construction and lifting machines, according to Dupoy's report.

"The families of these two Filipino workers never met money because our soldiers there would not abandon them," Ancestra said.

There are at least 65 Filipinos in Haiti who want to be repatriated to the Philippines, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said.

217 safe

Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos Jr. said he expected the number to increase as many Filipinos families in Haiti particularly in the capital Port-au-Prince, had lost their houses and property.

He said the Philippine Task Force was assessing up an evacuation route, either by taking to aircraft from Port-au-Prince or taking the Filipinos by bus to Sto. Domingo, Dominican Republic, and flying from there.

Of the 291 Filipinos in Haiti, a total of 217 are safe, but Conejos assured that 71 other Filipinos could not be considered "missing" but only "unaccounted for" because the task force could not pinpoint their locations at the moment.

The DFA released the names of 23 more Filipinos who were confirmed safe in Haiti.

The 23 are: 1. Abayde, Aurel; 2. Barrera, Gregorio; 3. Bicaldo, Joel; 4. Bolino, Evelyn; 5. Cruz, Teresita; 6. Fajardo, Ronald; 7. Gonzales, Gerardo; Gonzales, Adrian; 9. Gonzales, Aldo; 10. Gramis, Liesel; 11. Imperial, Elena Michael; 12. Lapuebla, Rolando; 13. Mendoza, Bobby; 14. Mendozamag, Ruby Belle; 15. Pareja, Ira Angela; 16. Sagalis, Wilfredo; 17. Sison, Rolando; 18. Torres, Allen Darren; 19. Torres, Monica; 20. Trinidad, Celerino; 21. Trinidad, Mylene; 22. Trinidad, Celerino; 23. Trinidad, Magdelyn.

The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) has dispatched a team to Port-au-Prince to help the Filipino workers and facilitate their repatriation. Where reports from Cynthia D. Balicasa and Kristine L. Alave

The 2010 Kidlat Awards Festival will again be held at the Boracay Regency Hotel this year. The dates to mark are April 12, Monday to the 14th, Wednesday. It's another opportunity for the advertising industry's creative leaders to renew the year's best work, network and learn from some of the leading professionals in the region.

KIDLAT AWARDS FESTIVAL 2010: PURE CREATIVITY

Board judges are: Ray Suan Ho of JWT Asia Pacific, who is also heading the Outdoor jury at the 2010 Cannes Lions; Eugene Cheong of Ogilvy Asia Pacific, Asia's most awarded copywriter; and Marcus Rabesalomo from Y&R Asia Pacific, who has previously been named Advertising Person of the Year by Campaign Brief Asia.

Two young creative teams will be competing to represent The Philippines in the Cannes Young Lions* competition. They will compete in the Film and the Cyber categories, and will be funded by the Creative Guild and generous industry sponsors. It all means that the country has two great chances to shine in the South of France this year.

The Guild has expanded Outdoor, Integrated and Direct competitions and these are more technical and craft awards too. Finally, to mark the end of the Noughties, we will be choosing the Kidlat Ads of the Decade in TV, Radio and Print (the only categories we had in 2000).

Make sure you get your entries in by 20 January 2010. That book your delegate package early and start getting ready for the beach! For bookings please contact Kenny Tomada at the Ads via email: kaap@pldtdsl.net or phone: 810-1200.

Ray Suan Ho
President/Executive Creative Director
JWT Asia

Marcus Rabesalomo
Group Creative Director - Asia
Y&R

Eugene Cheong
President & Chief Creative Officer
Executive Creative Director
Ogilvy Asia Pacific

The Creative Guild was founded in 1999 to promote Filipino Creativity, as part of the 44s of the Philippines and Advertising. Since then it has awarded the best work in the advertising and related industries on an annual basis. The PLDT-powered Kidlat awards is the industry "Oscar." Kidlat 2009 has built on last year's success with more entries than ever before. This year's Guild President is Sarah Summers of WEBER Shandwick / Proximity Philippines. The board consists of Vice President Ivan Lechon (Point), Director for Communications Sara Feria (JWT), Director for Young Creatives Chiqueng Barrogo (Campaigns and Ideas), Director for Industry Boat Barrogo (McCann Erickson), and Co-directors for Competition Eugene Gonzalez (Y&R) and Ayi Jarlego (Ayi, Jarlego / Publicis Manila) and Raoul Panaligan (Leo Burnett).

* The International Advertising Festival - Cannes Lions - is the largest gathering of worldwide advertising professionals and advertisers as well as the most prestigious awards advertising awards. For further information and to register to attend the Festival, please go to www.canneslions.com. The Philippine Daily Inquirer is the Official Country Representative of the Cannes Lions Festival. You may also direct your queries to our Corporate Affairs office at (632) 896-6000 local 356.

2 ex-finance execs seek dismissal of plunder raps

By Edson C. Tatad
Jr.

TWO FORMER Finance employees are asking the Sandiganbayan to throw out the plunder charge filed against them over an alleged tax credit scam from 1994 to 1997 that allegedly deprived the government of some P33 million in taxes.

In their motion to quash, former Finance department assistant Asuncion Magdael and former tax specialist Rowena Mahinay said they could not be charged with plunder since the information the Office of the Ombudsman filed against them did not prove they amassed any part of the P33 million.

Conspiring

Last year, the Ombudsman charged businessman Beatrice Chinghua, his wife Grace, other officials of the company's textile firm Filtex Textile Industrial Corp. (Filtex) and former Finance officials, including Magdael and Mahinay, for allegedly conspiring in using tax credit certificates (TCC) in Filtex even if it was not qualified to receive them.

TCCs allow export companies to claim refunds for duties paid on imported materials used as raw materials for export products. The government issues TCCs instead of cash refunds which companies can use to settle their tax obligations.

No finding

But in their motion to quash, Magdael and Mahinay said: "There is absolutely no finding that they accrued public officers' 'ill-gotten, accumulated or acquired' any part of the alleged amount of P33 million."

"On the contrary, the resolution (of the Ombudsman) expressly stated that it was accrued private persons, the spouses Beatrice and Gloria Chinghua' who unjustly enriched themselves and not any of the accused public officers," they said.

They added that the alleged P33 million involved in the complaint referred to revenues the government "could have collected and not money or property that was deemed to be taken from it."

Since the issues raised TCCs have already been encashed, they argued that "nothing was lost to the government and thus, nothing, no wealth, potential or not, could be 'amassed, accumulated or acquired' by anyone."

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Corrections

IN THE JAN. 11 ISSUE, a front page story—"1990 quake survivors dies in Haiti"—misstated the occupation of two Filipino fatalities in the Haiti earthquake. Pretty Penangon was a nanny data processor, while Jovanie Sug was an executive assistant at the United Nations mission in Haiti—not the other way around.

• • •

IN THE SAME ISSUE, Juan L. Mercado's "Viewpoint" column on Page A12 of the Opinion section—"Mercury of the (dead?)"—misspelled the name of an Inquirer newspaper. The newspaper's name is Hearing—not Harvey.

• • •

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors or writing to the Ang Sick, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PSI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Amorsolo Street, Makati City, Zip No. 1077-47-03 PC; e-mail address: inkpink@inquirer.com.ph.

Contact info about lack of full text or other daily requests to the Publisher: e-mail address: pinkchild@inquirer.com.ph or fax No. 897-47-03-96 from the Publisher. No phone number (897-4000) call 800.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday January 22, 2010
2nd Week in Ordinary Time
Memoria of Ezequiel

1st Reading: 1 Sm 15:16-23
Gospel: Mk 3:13-19

Jesus went up into the hill country and called those he wanted and they came to him. So he appointed twelve to be with him, and he called them apostles. He wanted to send them out to preach, and he gave them authority to drive out demons.

These are the Twelve: Simon, to whom he gave the name Peter; James, son of Zebedee, and John his brother, to whom he gave the name Boanerges, which means "sons of thunder"; Andrew; Philip; Bartholomew; Matthew; Thomas; James son of Alphaeus; Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot; and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

Commentary:

"That Jesus went up high mountains and called to himself those he wanted."

Like the apostles, we are all called to a special relationship with Jesus. The challenge lies in being willing to open up the wide invitation.

(Sunday's Inquirer carries an Evening you with Christ.)

(Servitor Communication Foundation, Inc., 4 Magsaysay St., Pandacan, Manila, Philippines 1011, Tel. 527-8131, Fax 527-8131, E-mail: servitor@servitor.com.ph, Website: www.servitor.com.ph)

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Ivler pistol same gun used in Ebarle slay

From page A1

half of the P1 million bounty for information leading to Ivler's capture.

British bodyguard

"I never expected to be him. I did not expect to lose you all, not as a government official, but as a mother's father," he told reporters.

Ebarle Sr. personally handed P500,000 from the Office of the President to the informant who was wearing a black ski mask. The other half of the reward will be given to the informant after the flag raising ceremony at the National Capital Region Police Office on Monday.

In an interview, Marlene Aguilar, Ivler's mother, said the informant was her British bodyguard.

"I recognized the informant as Mark Chainer when he was interviewed on TV. He was my bodyguard for more than two years, and he told NBI agents about the possibility of Jason being in the house," Aguilar told reporters.

At the press conference, Ebarle said: "This is providential... Through the help of our fair neighbors, we were able to find someone like him that led to the arrest of Jason Aguilar Ivler."

He said it was through the help of the late Press Secretary Cerge Remonde, "who was always there during our dialogues," and that President Macapagal-Arroyo approved the increase of the reward money to P1 million.

Ebarle also expressed gratitude to the NBI operatives who "continued to look for ways" to capture "the elusive felon."

Ivler, an American national and a purported Marine, was arrested by NBI agents after a shoot-out in which he was wounded along with two other operatives of the bureau. (See related story in Metro, Page A22.)

No regrets

He was taken to the Quirino Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City where he underwent surgery for gunshot wounds to the spleen and large intestine.

FOUR YEARS EARLIER This photo of Jovelyn Aguilar Ivler was taken on Aug. 17, 2004, when she was presented to the media after her arrest by NBI and IB agents in Zamboanga City over shots allegedly trying to flee the country. Ivler was earlier convicted in connection with the killing of Undersecretary Nestor Mata Jr. along the C-5 highway.

HUNTED VILLAPON NBI Director Nonnatus Rojas shows the machine Ebarle Jr. had pistol-whipped from Jason Ivler after a shoot-out at his home in Quezon City. At left is Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera.

But he apparently has no regrets.

Yesterday, on her chief's visit to the hospital after being taken into NBI custody, charged with obstruction of justice, and subsequently released on bail, Aguilar was finally able to talk to her son.

Speaking with reporters later, Aguilar quoted Ivler as saying: "I didn't want to kill any of (the NBI agents). I wanted them to kill me."

Ivler also told his mother to tell other family members "to get over it."

When asked if Ivler had shown remorse, she said: "Jason does not regret anything that's happened in his life."

Appeal to US Embassy

Ivler remains confined in the intensive care unit where, according to the QMMC head of surgery Dr. Fernando Lopez, he is no longer restrained and is "moving around."

Lopez said the patient's large intestine was already functioning and he had started oral feeding but was still on a generally liquid diet.

He said the patient may be moved out of the ICU as soon as a regular private room became available.

Asked to describe the patient's state of mind, Lopez said Ivler was calm.

On Wednesday, Aguilar told reporters that as in the case of US Marine Daniel Smith, who was convicted of raping a Filipina woman, the US government should take custody of Ivler too.

"I would like the US Embassy to take him in their custody because it's their job to protect their citizens, more so my son who fought for his country," the mother said.

Aguilar said the US Embassy had initiated communication and sent papers for Ivler to fill out.

"They want Jason to answer (him) personally and get the information directly from him," Aguilar said.

"I'm appealing to the US Embassy to protect him from Philippine authorities," she said, adding that she was making the appeal "considering that they treated him like an animal when he was bitten and wounded."

No word from embassy

But Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera said there had been no attempt by the US Embassy to make representations on Ivler's behalf.

She said she supported the US Embassy to let Ivler face a murder trial for the killing of Nestor Ebarle Jr. during a traffic altercation on Nov. 19.

"We do not discount the fact that the initial thing that happens is that the embassy claims nationals of (US citizens who are) incarcerated, but only insofar as their security is concerned. There is no word, no letter, no representation being made by the US Embassy," Devanadera told reporters yesterday.

"They don't meddle in the internal affairs of any country and more so if the offense charged is something that is not connected at all to their work. We've seen that in [the case of] Smith. There is a limited presentation that any country can do," she said, referring to the case against rape convict Smith who was eventually acquitted by the appellate court.

Trial for him and her?

Aguilar herself is facing trial for obstruction of justice for lying about her son's whereabouts.

Bail case was raffled off yesterday afternoon to the Quezon City Metropolitan Trial Court Branch 33 chaired by Judge Wilhelmina Agulo, although the staff at the Office of the Clerk of Court said the records had yet to be transmitted.

It is uncertain if Aguilar's husband, Stephen Holford, a British national who works as a consultant of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), is liable for the same offense.

But Holford is not covered by diplomatic immunity and may be charged in court if necessary, according to Eduardo Malaya, spokesperson of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Malaya said yesterday at a press conference that Holford's wife and daughter, who were initially invited to the DFA by ADB, did not enjoy the same privileges.

"[He is not on the] diplomatic level. He can be charged if there is evidence available to oppose his accreditation process since he is [not] a staff [member of ADB]," Malaya said.

Holford is the registered owner of the space utility vehicle driven by his stepson Ivler when the latter fatally shot Ebarle Jr.

Insufficient evidence

But the NBI's Magno said the basis for that there was not enough evidence to charge Holford with obstruction of justice.

"It's true he lives in the same house, but that is not enough," Magno said, adding that Holford was practically on the same boat as Aguilar's housemaid who purportedly neither saw nor were aware that Ivler was hiding in the Blue Ridge residence.

"Holford's case is different from Marlene's, who is there (at the time of the raid) and tried to hide Ivler now," said Magno, a lawyer.

He said that by law hiding a fugitive must be "willfully and knowingly done" to enable a charge of obstruction of justice to prosper in court.

"Did Holford know that Ivler is a fugitive from justice? Yes. But did he willfully hide Ivler from the law? That is the question that we have yet to answer, so we are still investigating," Magno said.

Unresolved

Magno said that from the sworn statements of the housemaid, Holford did not involve himself in the hiding of Ivler.

"In the meantime, he would go down from his room to take his child to school and go to work. And then [when] he comes home, he goes straight back to his room," Magno said.

He said Holford had only coincidentally under Aguilar's name because being British, Holford was not allowed to own property in the country.

But he added that the NBI's inability to file a case against Holford has not yet been resolved, the issue of whether the latter had diplomatic immunity.

On the other hand, Abalos Jr. said his lawyers were studying the possibility of filing a case against Holford "for sworn statements" before the NBI's recommendation.

With reports from Cynthia D. Balana, Rose Pastinggan and Julie M. Aurelio

Freddie says he told sis to surrender 'Anak,' but 'I'm not his father'

From page A1

didn't know where he was, and that she was fearful of what may happen if he comes out of hiding," Aguilar said.

He quoted his sister as saying that they were up against heavyweights...an apparent reference to Undersecretary Ernesto Ebarle Jr., whose son and namesake Ivler was said to have killed.

"Sabi ni Marlene, 'Kuya, multibayo' ang kalaban," he said, adding that he told her that marital law had long ended. "Sabi ko naman, 'Ano ka ba, hindi na martial law tayo ngayon.'"

Love, actually

He laughed, Aguilar said that if he only had his way, things might have turned out differently.

"But I couldn't do anything. I'm not Jason's father," he said, speaking in a mix of Filipino and English. "And I can't blame my sister. I actually received text messages from friends saying that if they were Marlene, they would have done the same, because a mother's love for her child down is unconditional."

Aguilar said he himself loved Ivler and refused to pass judgment on his nephew.

A few days ago Aguilar issued the following statement in Filipino to reporters, in response to calls for his sentiment:

"I can't say anything as yet. I need to know what exactly happened. When everything is clear, I will say my piece. My only prayer is that true justice prevail."

Like late dad

Asked by the reporter about his perceived impression of Ivler, Aguilar said: "Jason is the quiet type of guy. He knows how to get along with others and is very close to his cousins. He smiles a lot when you're in conversation.

"He wanted to be a soldier. That's why he became one. His father, Bob Ivler, is the same—quiet, simple, but he died young."

Anak's' lyrics

Fred Aguilar's description, Ivler was hardly the person who, on Monday, in his mother's house, was armed to the teeth and, in a gesture of defiance against the police, came out with guns blazing with an intent to kill.

The nagging question is: Why did Ivler, at the moment he was pinned down and was about to be hauled to a waiting police car, cry out loud that he wanted to die himself?

Whether he would end up guilty or charged, would he also come to grips with the romance that the late lines of "Anak" convey: "Pagsisisi ay isa ang isa't sumpa ng buhay ang dapat tagpuan ng..."

Marlene 'displays exemplary, unconditional love' but ...

From page A1

"There was a willingness to sacrifice herself and to protect her loved ones," Orillosa said, noting the "entrenched relationship" between the mother and son.

"There was a high tolerance for inappropriate behavior, and even an act of arresting ego for it. It's something like a negatively dependent relationship. They need each other... where the mother is the source of love and who needs nurturing," he said.

"If mother's love should be limitless," Orillosa explained. "But it doesn't mean considering the child's mistakes because helping or getting help for the child, imposing disciplinary actions on him, is always a sign of limitless love."

Another psychologist, a professor and developmental psychologist at the Ateneo de Manila University said that while parenting means doing one's best "to love and protect" one's child, another part of it would also be "helping a child face the consequences of his actions."

And doing so does not mean rejecting the child, said Dr. Velen Villaroman-Bautista, head of the University of the Philippines' Clinical Psychology Program and Orillosa's colleague in the Life Change Recovery Center in Quezon City.

The psychologists spoke with the Inquirer in separate interviews regarding the case of Aguilar and her son, Jason Ivler, who is suspected of killing two men in separate incidents.

The idea was to address the paramount question in the public mind: How far should a mother's love go?

HOUSE BEAUTIFUL This Aguilar-Holford residence designed by Marlene herself is Blue Ridge A, Quezon City, is a showcase of art, elegance and good taste.

Guidance

Bautista said that as much as it was the mother's role to ensure that her children would grow up to be "decent, reliable, significant contributors to society," she should also guide her children when they become ungrateful.

But the psychologists said they did not want to judge Aguilar's actions, especially since none of them had evaluated the embattled mother.

"Maybe she was just very scared of what could happen to her son. She was faced with a really, really difficult choice. It's really hard for a parent to see your child suffer," said Alampay, herself a young mother of three.

But then, she pointed out, Ivler was already 27 years old.

"I am sure he's old enough to know that what he did was wrong," Alampay said, whether he did shoot Renato Ebarle Jr. dead or hit from law enforcers.

'Boundaries'

That his mother appeared to have enabled him, as the National Bureau of Investigation has alleged, was like a mother aiding a five-year-old child that it was okay to get into a fight with a friend or hurt a sibling, Alampay said.

Asked if that denial there should be limitations in showing a mother's love, she said: "Definitely. Parents have to set limits. You have to tell your children you can't get away with it."

Bautista echoed that, saying there should always be "boundaries."

"I want to understand her," Bautista said of Aguilar.

Her appreciation of what could happen to her son once he was jailed, because "we don't see our justice system as a foundation of rehabilitation but more of punitive action."

CHR orders probe of Ivler's arrest

COMMISSION ON HUMAN Rights Chair Leila de Lima has ordered the CHR's office in the National Capital Region to look into the arrest of Jovelyn Ivler Aguilar after he was arrested.

"A fundamental and universally recognized right of person deprived of their liberty, such as an arrested person, is to be treated with humanity and respect for their dignity, given the presumption of innocence," De Lima said in a text message.

When asked if the NBI would be correct in say that it only responded to Ivler's aggressive actions with the bullets flying the initial shot, she said: "The issue of proportionality will also be looked into. The overall attendant circumstances need to be assessed. That's why we need to hear also the NBI's operatives' side."

She added that the CHR would also look into allegations that Ivler's mother and negotiators were denied access to him at the Quirino Memorial Medical Center.

Masbate placed under special police watch

By Marlon Ramos

MASBATE CITY—THE PHILIPPINE National Police yesterday created a task force to oversee the security operations in the province in anticipation of a tightly contested local elections in May.

The PNP chief, Director General Jesus Versoza, also placed the entire province under "special police watch," citing past incidents of election-related violence involving influential political clans.

Fifteen of the 21 towns in Masbate had been identified by the PNP Directorate for Intelligence as election "hot spots."

Khos, Espinosas, Seachons

Listed as among the country's poorest provinces, Masbate has witnessed the long-standing feud between the Khos, Espinosas and Seachons over the control of the provincial government seat.

"Masbate is one of the deadliest and most dangerous places during election, as local positions are latterly contested," Versoza said.

Versoza, who convened the Joint Peacekeeping Control Center (JPCC) to Camp Rizalty Serrano here, directed Chief Supt. Pedrozo Pulad to head "Special Task Force Masbate."

Apart from the 56 personnel of the Bicol police office, he said the force would be get nearly composed of 100 specially trained combination of the PNP Special Action Force.

"Masbate has always been of particular concern considering the number of election-related violence that happened here in the past 20 years," he told reporters after the JSCC meeting.

Versoza directed Pulad, who also heads the Directorate for Integrated Police Operations in Southern Luzon, to coordinate all security plans to ensure the least disruptive of private armies in Masbate.

Reshuffle of police chiefs

He said the PNP was still validating the existence of eight more private armies allegedly being maintained by politicians in the province.

To prevent elected officials from using the local police to their campaign, the PNP chief ordered a reshuffle of police chiefs in the province.

Additional mobile check points will be set up across the province to confiscate arms and unlicensed firearms, he said.

"It is vital [for us to] maintain a strong presence in the province of Masbate ... to break the cycle of election violence, intimidation and political killings in the province," he was said.

The perennial security threat in the province remained to be the New People's Army (NPA), according to Senior Supt. Antonieto Cerbo, chief of the PNP Intelligence Research Center.

Quoting intelligence reports, Cerbo said the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) "will try to influence political structures in Masbate" in the coming elections by supporting its "candidates/clans."

"The CPP/NPA will do anything to advance their own agenda," he said in the JSCC meeting.

VERZOSA: Masbate has always been of particular concern because of election-related violence. Fifteen out of 21 towns are identified as hot spots.

GMA going out with a big bang of ads upon ads

From page A1

also campaign detailing her so-called accomplishments in her final months in Malacañang.

It will be a follow-up to the costly, two-page newspaper advertisements that the government media unit lit some top with last month.

"Additional ads are still being contemplated. (They're) part of a plan to project the accomplishments (of the Arroyo administration)," DIA head Gonzalo "Boobie" Tiongson Jr. told reporters yesterday.

Limcaoco said the government wanted to put "on record" the President's accomplishments in areas, such as the economy, business process outsourcing sector and healthcare. This is meant "to stimulate the country to greater growth in the next few months," he said.

Self-fulfilling prophecy

"There's a phenomenon called the 'self-fulfilling prophecy,'" he said. "If we say we're doomed, then we'll be doomed. But if we say that we can do it ... then we will go forward, regardless of the politics that will happen in the next few months."

Last week's ads raised eyebrows, partly because of their timing and motif.

Titled "Gamay Tapa Noon, Gamay Tapa Ngayon," the ads detailed the gains of the Arroyo administration since 2001, covering the economy, social development, infrastructure, peace and order, job generation, agriculture, energy and environment, and digital infrastructure.

But the title ostensibly carried the remark of former Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, the administration's standard-bearer.

"I didn't notice that. Thank you for pointing that out. We ask our readers to draw their own conclusions," Gary Olivar, Mr. Arroyo's deputy spokesperson, told reporters.

Budget for ads

He advised the reporters to ask the PIA about the budget for the ads, but Limcaoco yesterday said, "I haven't added it up."

Limcaoco said the final cause from his agency's maintenance and other operating expenses. "There's no magic to that," he said.

"If you noticed, it was not a political ad, but an informative ad," he said.

"The net effect ... is to show all investors that the Philippines is a worth while place to put their money and we can see an last and before as negative news would have us believe. I think that showing the accomplishments is (one of many things) is one way to do it."

Philippine Daily Inquirer
Official Festival Representative

Cannes Lions announce 2010 Cyber, Design and Direct Jury Presidents

©2009 Getty Images

Three more top industry award-winning professionals were named as jury chairs by the organizers of the 57th Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival, the largest and most prestigious global advertising and communications awards.

Cyber Lions Jury President - Jeff Benjamin, VP/Interactive Executive Creative Director, Crispin Porter + Bogusky

Design Jury President - Steff Geissbuhler, Partner, C&G Partners

Direct Lions Jury President - Pablo Arougeris, CEO, Shackleton

Jeff Benjamin

"We have appointed three extraordinarily accomplished experts to lead the Cyber, Design and Direct Lions categories. We are truly honored to be working with them at Cannes Lions where their talent will add another dimension to these categories," states Terry Savage, Festival Chairman.

Jeff Benjamin joined Crispin Porter + Bogusky at the end of 2003. As VP/Interactive Creative Director, Jeff works on brands such as Burger King, Microsoft, Domino's Pizza, Coke Zero, and Geek Squad.

Steff Geissbuhler, Partner at C&G Partners, is among America's most celebrated designers of integrated brand and corporate identity programs. His work for a broad spectrum of international and national clients includes identity systems for HBO, Merck, Time Warner cable, Telemundo, Voice of America, Toledo Museum of Art, National Parks of New York Harbor, Crane & Co., Cabrera Investments, Conrad Hotels and Morgan Stanley Smith Barney, years.

Pablo Arougeris, CEO of Shackleton, set up the independent group of agencies in 2004. Prior to this, he started his career at dl Pozo in Argentina before moving to Spain where he headed the Comsports Group (Comisports and DP Proximity), took part in setting up Proximity Worldwide and was a member of the BBDO Board of Directors.

57th Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival, 20-26 June 2010, Cannes, France

The International Advertising Festival - Cannes Lions - is the world's biggest celebration of creativity in communications. For further information and to register to attend the Festival, please go to www.canneslions.com. The Philippine Daily Inquirer is the Official Country Representative of the Cannes Lions Festival. You may also direct your queries through our Corporate Affairs office at (632) 897.0808 local 208.

Pablo Arougeris

MMV

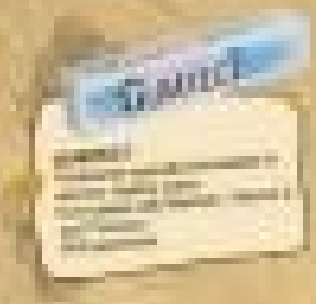
hapee

para sa lahat

"Ngipin Alagaan, Pa
Maganda m

Program of Activities
4th National Dental Health month

...gkain Pahalagahan ...ng Ngiti, Yaman ng Bayan"



PDA and Lamoiyan partner for 66 National Dental Health Month

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Passing the buck

THE DECISION OF THE EVEN-MORE-CONTROVERSIAL second division of the Commission on Elections to allow former President Joseph Estrada to run for president again is, in a word, spineless. It is bureaucratic cowardice masquerading as populist philosophy. We share the view of millions of Filipinos that the Constitution—and the Constitution alone—bars Estrada from running for the presidency again. But if the Comelec had allowed the former president, convicted last immediately purchased of the crime of plunder in 2007, to run on solid legal grounds, we would have respected the reasoning behind the ruling.

EDITORIAL

Instead, we have this: "In the end, it is the Filipino people who would set us the final arbiter as to whether they would have Estrada sit again as president. It is the electorate's choice of who their president should be. The better policy approach is to let the people decide who will be the next president." The basic idea in the second division's decision is said three times, perhaps because, stated baldly by itself, its thinness as an argument cannot be disguised. But repeated, it smacks almost reasonable.

There is just one problem with it: It undermines the Comelec's own power to screen candidates for the presidency. If it is indeed true, as the division chaired by Commissioner Mendoza Ferrer asserts, that the "better policy approach is to let the people decide who will be the next president," why did the commission doggedly discuss of aspiring candidates? Set aside, for now, the question of qualifications imposed by the Constitution itself. Assuming that all aspirants who had filed certificates of candidacy met the basic qualifications, why allow only 10 to run if the "better policy approach" is to let the electorate decide?

The second division's main justification for allowing Estrada to run again, therefore, does not justify anything. It merely passes the responsibility for deciding on Estrada's qualifications, under cover of a populist let-the-people-decide argument, to the Supreme Court.

But we also share the common view that it is in fact one of the Comelec's most crucial responsibilities to screen presidential (and other) candidates. To follow the Estrada doctrine to the minding of letting the people decide on strictly legal or constitutional matters involving election cases is to weaken yet another political institution. (The undermining of institutions fits into the true Estrada legacy, but whether Estrada was a good chief executive or not is, strictly speaking, irrelevant to the legal and constitutional issues of a president's reelection.) We need the Comelec, then, to qualify all candidates. That includes former presidents too.

The second division's main argument for allowing Estrada to run again, therefore, represents an abdication on the part of the Comelec of its mandated responsibility to qualify all candidates for election office. Whether because of Estrada's celebrity or because of the uniqueness of the case (nobody before Estrada had dared to run for reelection as president under the 1987 Constitution, although it the Supreme Court ruminates that Comelec we can anticipate President Macapagal-Arroyo considering a reelection bid in 2004), or because the Comelec had earlier been embarrassed by reversals by the Supreme Court, the second division essentially followed the time-hallowed bureaucratic practice of passing the buck.

Its decision weighed two choices: an absolute ban on re-election, which is in fact how the Constitutional Commission of 1986 saw the issue and which explains why the restriction in the constitutional provision is on "any re-election"; or a limited ban, which is how Estrada's lawyers argued the case and which explains their insistence on "The President" as the key phrase in the provision, like instead of deliberately choosing one or the other opinion, the second division opted to appeal to public opinion. It relied, quoting existing jurisprudence, that "on political questions, this court may err but the sovereign people will not."

Again, it all sounds reasonable, until we take a closer look. Why did the commissioners view Estrada's disqualification case as a political question, and not as the legal and constitutional issue it really is? It comes down to foolishness, at the tail of it.

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Loren on abuses of pawnshops

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE TALK OF THE TOWN'S SOCIAL CIRCLES on the wealthy (women) who lost their prized jewelry and family heirlooms to a street-walking former wife of a prominent socialite. It seems that the wife pretended to visit her in her hotel then jewelry or a big party. She left with them personal checks as guarantee. After the wife she paid the owners, got back her personal check, and split the profit.

Everything went well until her checks began bouncing. When the owners asked for the return of their jewels, it turned out that she had pawned them at pawnshops. Her family offered to turn over the pawnshop to her to the owners but they had to redeem the jewels themselves. Naturally, the owners filed cases of estafa against her, but this is where the story becomes bizarre.

The wheels of justice just refuse to turn, and when they turn at all, they head in the opposite direction. The victims suspect it was because of the influence of the socialite. For one thing, the case is reinvestigated every few months, according to the Department of Justice for one year already. For another, when a judge issued a warrant for her arrest, she was confined in a private hospital instead. Her family claiming that she suffered a nervous breakdown.

The victims asked her court to have her examined, treated and confined in the National Mental Hospital. Her family asked another court to issue a writ of habeas corpus for her. The writ asked that she be brought to court but that, not any beyond its jurisdiction, the court ordered her transferred to another hospital. The victims' lawyers lost track of her, the criminal cases against her are not moving at all, and they could not recover their jewelry. All of these were made possible by the influence of the socialite, the victims suspect, and they are on a loss as to what to do next. The government and the judicial system are not working together anymore.

The case has reached the Senate. Sen. Loren Legarda delivered a privilege speech on the floor of the Senate which dwelt on the abuses committed by pawnshops that have become notorious, since they are now "operating 24/7" and some opening more and more branches nationwide."

As I see it, the property of the private depositors there is poverty. When people run out of money, they pawn their jewelry and other valuables for some ready cash, hoping to get them back later when times get better.

But Loren's speech was not to promote pawnshops. She wanted "to call the attention of the public," she said, "particularly the concerned government agencies, to the abuses and report that are being committed against the public through these pawnshops."

The report that she spoke upon said of a "certain Ms. Elmy So Gatmaitan, a.k.a. Marilen Santander ... [who] goes around as an agent, scrutinizing luxurious, business people or the vulnerable individual with valuable assets—be it cash or jewelry. Pretending to be a buyer of expensive jewelry she will get expensive pieces of jewelry from owners or fellow traders in exchange for guarantee checks she will issue. With the help of her cohorts, ... she will pawn items and keys of jewelry in exchange for quick cash, at illegally conducting pawnshops in Malabon, Navotas and Caloocan. To establish the ownership of these pieces of jewelry, Gatmaitan, pawnshop agents or tellers are aware of the questionable manner by which these personal properties or assets are secured but, in the hope of earning from the transaction, remain only one more in the others were and proceed with the transaction."

Loren continued: "There is a need to take a closer look into the operations of the pawnshop business. Moreover, it is not only these pawnshops which should be prevented from violating the law but also those individuals who buy or additionally law passes, these pieces of jewelry fraudulently acquired in our country—prices which are way below the market value and which would, and should, arouse suspicion on the circumstances in which these valuable properties were acquired.

"This is found underpriced many times over due to questionable practices which have no qualms in skirting illegal ways."

Going back to Gatmaitan, Loren said: "The clerks in the document from which her checks are taken). On other occasions, she also induced small investors to entrust their money to her in exchange for guarantee checks, representing fixed returns on their investments. Again, she claims the accounts from which the checks were issued.

"Gatmaitan preys on unsuspecting investors and business persons, capitalizing on friendship and relationships she forged with her victims. The victims fall prey into the usefulness of her victims, using her long-term relationship with known society personalities, tapping their trustful confidence and trust in her.

"I am appalled at the extent that [people engaged in] these shady practices can go without any action taken into it against persons perpetrators that operate with impunity." They must be stopped!

"One look at legislators does not only entail enacting new pieces of legislation," Loren reminded her fellow senators. "We carry the responsibility of making sure that these laws are implemented and the rights of the public are protected."

As I see it, there is a reason to be concerned here. If you are poor, you wouldn't have any jewelry that would tempt shady operators to con you. The victims, if you will note, are all wealthy who have it in income some riches by selling their jewelry at huge profits. The operators capitalized on their greed. Even if you are rich with plenty of jewelry, you wouldn't be victimized if you don't want more, more, more.

'Strategic retirements'

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

THE CONSTITUTIONAL TEST IS CLEAR ENOUGH: Macapagal-Arroyo may not preempt the next president's power to appoint the chief justice. Mr. concern here is less about legal discussion, which I believe is unequivocal enough, and more about its manipulation, of how Malacañang can even make or think, in the first place, that she can plausibly appreciate her powers under Section 4.

I've written once or twice already many in the legal profession have wondered whether Ms Arroyo can find a way to appoint the next chief justice, and the frequent answer I have encountered was something like "Ms. she wouldn't dare." I find the same answer with other Filipinos outrageous proposal—that GMA would run for Congress in Pampanga. Ms. she wouldn't dare. But Ms Arroyo is fantastic in that she pushes legal limits to the outer limits of acceptable meanings, and shows the imagination to make the politically bizarre to seem rational.

It starts with the uncanny timing of events: the impending retirement of Chief Justice Reynato Puno on May 17, 2010 falls within the ban on midnight appointments by the President. Police political time runs another constitutional requirement, namely, that the President must fill that vacancy within 90 days from May 17. But would her hand cut it after the appointment ban? Section 15, item of Article VII, 2010 when Ms Arroyo's term of office ends, there a simple issue for the new president to appoint a new CJ, namely, the whole month of July and 10 days in August, a total of 41 days.

Thus the only viable argument available to the Palace would be to push it having it vacant in the chief justiceship. Yet the Supreme Court has enough rules and loopholes to enable an acting CJ to preside over the Court during that period. Having an acting CJ will not cripple the Court, and will not double it from performing its functions. While having a permanent CJ is ideal, the constitutional ban on appointments does not require it.

The same stage is normally preordained, dealing with the institutional checks on the President's power to appoint a CJ. Not the Presidency, but the Judicial and Bar Council also participates in the process. JBC vetting only for the Members of the Supreme Court, and not for the CJ. It's right, the chief justiceship is not mentioned where, except that the Constitution also says that the "Supreme Court shall be composed of a Chief Justice and 14 Associate Justices" and that the JBC, has the "principal function of recommending appointees to the Judiciary." The CJ is a "Member" of the Court and is "appointee to the Judiciary," and that is why the chief justices under the 1987 Constitution have been vetted through the JBC.

The JBC has even commenced the process of vetting the next CJ, making the careful distinction between the nominating steps, which is the Palace, and the actual recommending to the Palace, which is the JBC's job. Before the ban on appointments, the JBC has announced that it will open. The real danger here is that once the JBC short-list is in, the ball is really in the President's hands should it be opportunity pressure to sell. There are two possible scenarios for that.

In standard form, in his Monday column in the Inquirer, has rightly noted one scenario that will enable Ms Arroyo to appoint the next CJ: if Chief Justice Puno can be persuaded to consider retiring. In the history of the Supreme Court, the first two have called "strategic retirement." Their justices have been known to time their retirement so that their likely replacement will be of the same persuasion level. US high court justices have even timed their retirements to the term of a friendly president. Typically, the justices, a liberal justice will either delay or accelerate his retirement for when a Democrat is in the White House and a Democratic majority is in the Senate (that will confirm the nomination, akin to our Commission on Appointments for non-judicial appointments).

Chief Justice William Howard Taft makes the first case when resigning for promotion of the Philippines I wanted for fellow Republican Herbert Hoover to win the White House and, until then, continued to serve despite his poor health because he wanted "to prevent the Democratic leader from getting control of the Court," referring to Justices Holmes and Brandeis. Chief Justice Warren Burger, anxious that the Republican might lose control of the Senate, resigned and his retirement and swearing-in of his successor Rehnquist to coincide with Ronald Reagan's re-C2 and Antonin Scalia as justice.

In a widely reported example, Justice Hugo O'Connor, a Reagan appointee, had long resented to retire but had to ask it was not more politically advantageous for Democrat Bill Clinton's right-year win at the White House to end. Upon learning initial reports that Democrat Al Gore had won Florida in the 2000 election, she is said to have uttered, "Oh, this is terrible." Realizing that her retirement plans would be delayed to another four years.

All these, however, assume a jurisdiction even ideological or philosophical approaches to legal issues. But in the Philippines, just pass the legal issues. Not in the Philippines, and the issue is not whose political philosophy is more just, but whose political justice will be legitimate. The American notion of strategic retirement therefore has no place in our constitutional order.

The other corollary, of course, is a failure of our computerized elections. Who will oversee the power to appoint if we have no duly-elected president after June 30? The 90-day period to appoint a CJ would expire on Sept. 27. But—you can imagine—the political wheeling-dealing at that moment will have that he or she must probably don't must respect the 90-day period and appoint the CJ. But perhaps by then, legal questions will be the least of our problems in the face of a revolutionary moment.

Comments to jurisprudence@gmail.com

A major setback for Obama

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA SUFFERED a huge political shock on Tuesday when the relatively unknown Republican Scott Brown was elected in Massachusetts to the Senate seat once held by the Kennedy family for more than half a century in a vote considered as a referendum on the performance of Obama's presidency, which marked its first anniversary on Jan. 20. Massachusetts' voters elected Brown, a state senator with 52 percent of the vote, defeating Democrat Martha Coakley who polled 47 percent.

The loss of the Massachusetts seat changed the balance of power in Washington. The Senate Democrats lost their 60-40 majority needed to enforce Obama's legislative reform agenda highlighted by his health-care bill. Brown's election gives the 41st Republican in the 100-seat Senate, allowing Republicans to block the health-care legislation, and other key legislation.

The electoral setback became even more humiliating to Obama in a sense as the end of his first anniversary in office which has been marked by a cool of his approval ratings.

Celebrating the Republican capture of the Massachusetts seat, which the late Sen. Ted Kennedy occupied for 47 years, as "the people's revenge," the independent voter of Massachusetts has spoken. The voters of this commonwealth defied the odds and the experts. While the house is mine, this historic seat belongs to no one person, no one political party," Brown declared. "The anger, frustration and disenchantment over what the US media have reported as Obama's unfulfilled election promises. The election underlined the reversal of the euphoria over Obama's election, and exposed the change in the mood of the voters in the aftermath of his unimpressive achievements, and sent the warning to the Democrats that they would be in trouble in congressional and mayoral elections in November.

I'm the one and only senator first point out, "it is the Republican who sits in a crowd to victorious," BBC Washington correspondent Philippa Thomas observed. Analysts believe that the next moves how mood in Washington is driven by voters frustration with high unemployment, bank and auto industry bailouts, exploding federal budget deficits and partisan wrangling over health care.

The election result came amid opinion polls showing nearly half of Americans think Obama is not delivering on his major campaign promises. It was the third major loss for Democrats in state-wide elections since Obama became president. Republicans won gubernatorial seats in Virginia and New Jersey in November amid Obama's unpopularity.

A drafter Obama admitted on Wednesday he had mistakenly neglected making a "direct connection to the American people." Obama told ABC News, "If there's one thing that I regret this year is that we were so busy just getting stuff done and dealing with the immediate crises that were in front of us that I think we lost some of the sense speaking directly to the American people."

Many services reported that the president said he had made a mistake. One of the concentrated on making good policy decisions, voters would understand them, but instead they had become consumed by a "feeling of remoteness and detachment" from Washington.

Republicans interpreted their strength in a clear sign that Americans wanted Obama to slow his reform drive, seeking to revamp the US health care system. Republican leaders said the vote was "a wake-up call to the administration and Congress." Republican Minority Leader Mitch McConnell said the vote was the latest in vindication of the Republican Party's strategy of branding Obama as a "traditional big-spending liberal who wants to expand the size of government," he said, "The American people have made it abundantly clear that they're more interested in dividing unemployment than expanding government. They're tired of the government spending more than ever at a time when most people are spending less. And they don't want the government taking over health care."

Obama came under a scathing criticism from media commentators. The Guardian correspondent (in London) highlighted a story with the head, "Obama battered by criticism as anniversary approaches." Writing for the Guardian, Chris McGreal said, "But the criticism that stings the most has come from some of the very people who helped propel Obama to power."

Prominent voices on the left of the Democratic Party have grown increasingly concerned at what they see as too little change people can believe in, particularly the administration's failure to use passion on abuse, such as health care legislation and America's wars," in other words, to the liberals, Obama is not left enough to push welfare state-type social programs.

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Reality check for Erap

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

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Perhaps, it's believe—unconsciously—that the voting public has a short memory. Or worse, that people are so mesmerized by his image and movie persona that they can forgive him his sins against the Republic, especially his conviction for plunder. He may have been pardoned by then-President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, but he has been pardoned in the public eye? And having been buried once, are Filipinos eager to compel us to risk being buried once more?

As the saying goes, "Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me." Perhaps it is vindication that Erap seeks in contesting the presidency once more. But that vindication, if people's opinions are anything to go by, may prove elusive and impossible to extract for him second.

STRIKING this Monday until Friday, close to 3,000 priests from all over the Philippines and MICRONESIANS has been adopted in many countries around the world as a poverty-alleviation measure.

Which a mere become microfinance—the lending of small amounts to the poor (most of them women) to use in enterprises—was never designed to permanently lift families from below the poverty line, although some have made it out of destitution, for others microfinance has simply provided relief from the day to day pressures of survival. But still the beneficiaries if they do not consider this in itself sovereignty-bearing.

One such beneficiary is Barbada Gregorio, who was one of the speakers during symposium in the Taguig City Hall. With a monthly income of P1,000 a month, Barbada found that she was not barely meeting her family's needs.

This was also true for the women who belonged to Kapatiran Credit Cooperative, that Barbada has headed for 11 years. This when a DSWD official told them about the bill Employment Assistance Kaunlaran or EKAS, which the department is administering, Barbada and her group members joined the program.

Like the other members, Barbada received an initial loan of P5,000, which she used as seed capital to buy and sell ready-to-wear clothes and fashion accessories. She has since been able to sell her products from the business and used the money to send her household expenses as well as embark on home improvement projects and finance her children's education.

Following the example of its Cannons Bank of Bangladesh, which has been replicated successfully elsewhere, including the Philippines, groups of women accessing EKAS assume collective responsibility for the loans. As president of her cooperative, Barbada makes sure the members repay their loans, and since they have managed to maintain their good standing as borrowers, they look forward to a third cycle of loans to expand their enterprises. "The EKAS program is good, effective and economic," Barbada enthuses.

Microfinance is one of the key components of the Accelerated Hunger Mitigation Program (AHMP) of President Arroyo, putting more money in poor people's pockets and thus, putting food on the table.

Fearless people

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

OVER THE YEARS, I HAVE RETURNED AGAIN and again to Jose Mojsaldon's "La novela del mundo" (1910) for work and pleasure. Alejandrino's narrative is a mine of obscure information that has sparked many essays because he did not write a boring academic history but told stories about the men he knew personally, those more consequential and to us textbook and monumental, the men remembered at bronze because they figured prominently in the emergence of the nation. Through Alejandrino, we see our heroes later, we see them as young students in Europe long before they became heroes, and this is why he narrates us as schoolchildren. If you read between the lines and look and down Luna, you will discover other people forgotten by history "but will discover humor and the human side of the struggle for independence.

Editorio Evangelista was described as a man who was not made of death, bullets or even cannon balls. I have always wondered how one achieving some engineering problem he had written out on the sand with his walking stick, a cannon ball fell a few feet from where he was standing in deep thought. There was an explosion, but Evangelista was not rattled. He did not run for cover. All he did was brush off the soil that fell on his coat, and then he continued with his episode. Another time a shell of cannon ball fell through the roof of his bedroom causing him by a few feet. He stayed in bed, turned round and returned to sleep.

Of course, this was interpreted as bravery, but maybe Evangelista was deaf from all the shells exploding around him. Evangelista was known as the first minister for the presidency of the First Republic, but he died in battle, and it was rumored that he was not killed by enemy fire, but perhaps by an assassin who got behind him in the thick of battle and shot him in the back. Then, we get Emilio Aguinaldo and one of Philippine history's unsolved mysteries.

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"Pedro Gonzalez!" replied the man, at the same time handing over a visiting card upon which that name was printed.

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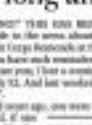

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

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Many of us have such reminders of our mortality closer to home. Last last year, I lost a cousin, a very successful lawyer, who was only 52. And last weekend, my partner's stepfather died aged 87.

A hundred years ago, one were considered very fortunate, and very old, if one lived into his 50s. Today, to die in your 60s is still considered premature.

Life expectancy rose dramatically in the 20th century with the control of infectious diseases. This happened even before the discovery of antibiotics and vaccines, almost because of general improvements in sanitation, housing and nutrition. Most of the lives saved were those of children, and that public health's revolution is still happening today, boosted by vaccinations, antibiotics and simple oral rehydration medicine for diarrhea. (It just had to mention that last medicine, considered by the British journal The Lancet as the most important medical discovery of the 20th century.)

Because children have been surviving in larger numbers, life expectancy rates soared upwards in most countries over the last few decades. Today the Filipino's life expectancy rate is almost 70 years. (Male that is an average. In the National Capital Region the rate is 71, while in Ilocos Norte it is 53.)

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Ridiculous publicity gimmick

LETTERS

RAVING WORKED FOR WOMEN'S rights for over 25 years now, we in Gabriela were astounded to hear of a party-list's proposal mandating a 10-year validity for marriage. The proposal is not only ridiculous; it could actually do more harm than good to women. Marriage cannot simply be ended with "Expiration Date" or "Best Before."

Forcing expiration dates on marriage solves nothing. It does not address any issue that women struggle with every day, such as violence against women. In our experience in the community, abuse is the most common reason women decide to leave a union. Abuse happens anytime in the marriage. Instead of arbitrary proposals, we should push for laws that protect women and give them an option to get out of an abusive relationship without having to wait for their marriages expire exactly the 10th year.

While the proposition sees the proposal's supposed benefits to abandoned and separated women who cannot get an annulment, expiration dates can encourage not still an solution. Instead, we should enact more laws that would protect women and their children from violence that leads to abandonment and separation. The laws should also penalize perpetrators of violence against women and children.

Thus, we cannot help but think that the proposal is a metropolitary gimmick from an unknown group that would like to project itself as "pro-women." In the end of getting popular support, such a proposal only espoused to lack of grasp on women's issues.

The impractical proposal, however, serves as a reminder to everyone to be more discerning and rational, especially in choosing which party list they will vote for in this year's elections.

—GINA DE JESUS,
vice chairperson,
Gabriela National Alliance of Women in the Philippines
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Brgy. Ilaya,
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gabriela.phils@gmail.com

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of issues and players by the leagues, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Glass Tower Arcovia, corner Ruiz and Alexander Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Fax: 897-4753, 897-4796, or e-mail (with reader's name and complete address) to readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number in e-mail addresses for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

MMDA measures eased traffic flow in MM

THE REPLY TO ELISEO BELAVENTE letter titled "Ways to ease Edsa traffic," (Inquirer, 1/16/10) I disagree with Belavente's view and I would rather say that traffic in Metro Manila has improved a lot. I will not blame this to the Edsa's dirty and dangerous drivers or to our major thoroughfares. These measures have eased traffic flow and favored public safety based on my modest views.

Belaventes proposes solutions from his experiences in Canada and New York. We are not a first-world country mainly because we are culturally different. For one thing, Canadians and American bus drivers usually are not Filipinos. Bus drivers in some of Europe's countries are also not Filipinos. The common factors and examples of our Caucasian brothers are that they follow our traffic laws and the pedestrians have the proper roadways and unloading points.

I have been driving through Edsa and Quezon Avenue daily for more than 15 years. And I must say it was only Bayan Patriarch who, in front of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, has moved enough political will to solve the traffic problems. He introduced many innovative ideas I think were successful.

The U-turn slots along Quezon Avenue made driving smoother; the slots proved better than having to stop in dilatory every intersection with inefficient stoplights.

I commend the MMDA for the construction of foot bridges and iron grills, especially in Cubao, Edsa-New Avenue and Edsa-North Avenue. Traffic would have been more unbearable without them. Many may disagree with the solutions, but at least Sotto's chosen do something. And people like me, who commute daily, appreciate the efforts of Mayor Bautista as well.

Lastly, we don't need to travel to Canada and New York to test the solutions. We just need to drive every day and we will know the problems and their solutions.

—HELEN MARIE,
144 Sabres St., Sabredo Village,
Makati City 1197

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₱3,399	Manila to Kuala Lumpur or Shanghai
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INTERNATIONAL (GO FARE)	
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Quoted fares are one-way. Limited availability. Fares are exclusive of government fees and taxes. Fares are non-refundable. Flight changes need to be made more than 7 day before date of departure. Go Lite Fares are available upon booking for guests traveling without check-in baggage. Add ₱ 500 to fare upon booking if traveling with check-in baggage. CAB approval letter and accreditation of carriage apply and are available online at http://cebupacificair.com/Pages/Publications/CAB-Accreditation.aspx. Call (02) 70-20-888 or Manila, (032) 230-88-88 in Cebu or visit the travel agent near you.

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KOMIKONG BDO

Serious reforms being instituted within PSC

IN RESPONSE TO FORMER SEN. VICENTE Chavez' letter ("PSC should not meddle in sports," Inquirer, 1/20/10), please allow me to correct his misconception that the PSC was created a "playground for appointees" like myself. It was also aimed to correct the "pioneering" like him.

Since I took over as chairman of the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), I have instituted serious reforms to the agency. First, we dismissed "ghost" athletes and coaches and those who have not produced anything in international competitions. Secondly, we ran after and filed charges against sports officials who have "padded" their budget allocations to the PSC. We have completed the construction and rehabilitation of sports venues and dormitories to provide better training facilities and accommodations for the athletes. Further, we were able to get the entire budget requested by PSC's past administrations, from Ferdinand Marcos, amounting to around ₱165 million and ₱50 million.

To the Last SEA Games, the PSC owed from its policy that only gold medal-class medalists of previous SEA Games and other select international sports competitions would be funded. I never had a hand in the selection of athletes, it was Gen. Mario Tamayo, SEAG chef de mission, and PSC commissioner Jose Mendo who came up with the proposed 187 gold medalists. The government spent ₱56 million in support of the Lao campaign where our country produced 34 gold medals and placed fifth; the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) campaigned one up and placed gold-medal.

It is another misconception that the PSC will table a lead role in the selection of athletes for the Asian Games. The POC and the national sports associations (NSAs) have the prerogative to select the athletes. But the PSC has the discretion to fund whomever among the NSAs' recommended bets passed rigorous clearance.

Since the creation of the PSC, billions of pesos have been spent by the government to enhance sports development programs. But up to now, we are still dreaming of a true Olympic gold medal. I am determined to clean up the system and ensure proper disbursements of funds. If that is government transactions, then the PSC should be abolished and let the POC take over.

In closing, I dare Mr. Chavez to name a POC chairman from a new-rich titled "Inquirer columnist to attend PSC classes." (Manila Bulletin, 11/23/02) "Some sports leaders might consider (the title proposed version of RA 6847) as government interference, but we don't look it in that way." The PSC needs more people, particularly on policies concerning the use of government funds. Representative Pimentel's was pushing for the amendment of RA 6847 into a law that would require the concurrence of the PSC—the government's sports agency—in the selection, training and sending of national teams to competitions overseas."

—AMBASSADOR HARRY C. ANGPING,
chairman,
Philippine Sports Commission

In agreement with Tulfo

MY BIRTHDAY BREAKFAST CONSISTS OF A tongue-burning coffee and the Inquirer. I always read the editorials and columnists first. Thus, I always read Ramon Tulfo's columns when available.

I agree with him when he said in his Jan. 11 column titled "Time-wise investment and illness," that Filipino heroes are monument-ED illnesses, inheritance. Joseph "Erap" Estrada would have never become president. The present, logical relevance of this view of Tulfo is founded on the very fact that not even 100 percent of the people who voted for Estrada as an overall believe was country transparency or corruption. Why? Well, because development, in its true and progressive sense, would not come in 10 to 50 years. A person would be remembered as a statesman, if not a messiah, if he followed his respective predecessors and carried on the dreams and aspirations of the masses.

However, the same would not be said to the case of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as she was not voted into power the second time around.

Maybe next months, after the term of President Fidel Ramos, one term president should have been Raul Roco. But as fate had it, Roco would become the first president to never had the beloved to the heavens.

So the final months, songs na nga lang salitan ga ang Pinoy pag nawala para kay Erap.

—JOHN S. TABUDDAO,
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Cops arrest 409 across Bicol in revived 'jueteng' campaign

LEGAZPI CITY—At least 409 persons have been arrested since police operatives across the Bicol region stepped up their campaign against illegal gambling operations two weeks ago, a police official said Thursday.

The campaign took off as the intelligence officer and group director of the Bicol Police Provincial Mobile Group, now the Camarines Sur Public Safety Management Company, were relieved following the suspension into office of a new police chief for the province.

At least P53,613, believed to be bets, were also confiscated by police operatives, said Chief Supt. Cecilio B. Calleja Jr., acting PNP Bicol regional director.

Heads to roll

Calleja warned police chiefs in provinces and towns in the region that their heads would roll if illicit offices would fail to stop illegal gambling.

"Police commanders who cannot perform the task of stopping gambling activities in their turf will be replaced by those capable and willing to accomplish the task," he said.

Calleja added that police have already filed criminal charges against the persons involved, including their financiers.

Among those considered gambling officials defined and penalized under Republic Act No. 9287 (Illegal gambling) are said games, "pedat pedi," cara y cruz, fruit game machines, "sakla," illegal cockfighting, "tupadahan" and "patong."

Out with the old

In Naga City, SPO4 Romulo Dino-Infante, spokesperson of the Camarines Sur Provincial Police Office, reported Wednesday that the relief of two police officers here coincided with the assumption to office of Senior Supt. Ferencio S. Bartocillo, new provincial director, on Jan. 8.

Palabrica declined to comment on the relief of the police officers, saying it was only Calleja who could clarify the matter.

He also declined to reveal the names of the relieved police officers and their stations in at least yesterday afternoon.

Palabrica said upon assumption to office, Bartocillo ordered all chiefs of police in the two cities and 35 municipalities in Camarines Sur to "conduct a relentless campaign against all forms of illegal gambling, especially the illegal numbers game jueteng."

Small fry still

He said Calleja issued an advisory aim to all chiefs of police in the province "not to be selective in the campaign against the proliferation of jueteng during his visit here on Jan. 14.

But Palabrica revealed that only his subalterns have been apprehended so far and that no jueteng operators have been identified or apprehended until now.

He said it was the intelligence officer and the group director, who were relieved, that have the information on the identities of operators who have been operating in Camarines Sur in the previous years.

Palabrica claimed that the anti-jueteng campaign, upon the assumption of Bartocillo as acting provincial director, had yielded positive results and declared that police have put a stop to the illegal numbers game all over Camarines Sur. —*Roy M. Stead and Anjo Escandor Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

ZOOMS Sinquia, the candidate with enough courage to face up to President Macapagal-Arroyo in Pampanga's second district, receives his award during the Malaysian anniversary last Jan. 18. —NOEL CELIS

GMA rival gets award for 'courage'

STA. RITA, PAMPANGA—FOR deciding to stand up against a strong President who is running for a seat in Congress, Alfonso Sinquia was conferred an award for "courage personified."

"All I wanted to tell our townmates is that Representation is its not cower in the face of challenges. We cannot allow evil motives to reign in our province," Sinquia, a Liberal Party (LP) candidate, said when he accepted the award from the party chieftain on Monday.

The award, given on Alabanan's 12th anniversary, celebrated on the theme "Realizing Hope, Celebrating Heroes, Embracing Change."

"Many are saying that 2009 was a year of great losses, tragedies and unending political crises. From the untimely death of a democracy icon, to accusations of corruption and malpractices, epic catastrophes brought by Typhoons 'Ondoy' and 'Pepeng,' the almost annual maritime disasters up to the gruesome Ampatuan massacre, the year could very well go down in history as a year of great despondency and uncertainty," Alabanan secretary general Lorenzo Ustalio said in a letter to Sinquia.

New heroes emerged amid these, he said.

Ustalio said Sinquia is being recognized for the "political courage you displayed as a genuine agent of change as you embark on a campaign to reassure the insatiable ambitions of a detested political figure for more power, an admirable crusade which by one fell swoop brought you instant long lasting inspiration."

Sinquia said he considered the award a "big honor," adding that it belonged to hundreds of good governance crusaders in Pampanga's second district whose he, friends, close colleagues and two other independent candidates are going to drag to out for a seat in Congress.

He disagreed with views that the fight was over even before it has started because Mr. Arroyo has gone around the district's six towns at least 30 times before filing her certificate of candidacy on Dec. 1.

The Department of Public Works and Highways, which is under the Office of the President, had spent P456 million in his lawyer's district in 2009. At least P223 million of the amount was spent in Lubao, her father's hometown. The district is plastered with so many tarpaulins hailing his Arroyo's projects.

Because the situation has come to this, many have taken to calling the battle as "David versus Goliath." Mr. Arroyo has since lowered her visits to the district, skirting it when she went to the Clark Freeport on Wednesday to induct new officers and members of the Corresponsyon in Media.

Sinquia said he was "not afraid" and engaged a "good fight" with LP support. "Kapampangans are good people. They have a high sense of honor and concern for others. They've shown that in the 2007 elections," he said. Yousle Hyden, *Inquirer Central Luzon*

Davao execs slam anti-Red solons over smear campaign

DAVAO CITY—LOCAL OFFICIALS are protesting what they said was a campaign by two anti-communist party-list legislators to destroy their city as an unsafe place to live in.

Councilor Silio Abellera on Tuesday said the legislators—Antiporta party-list congressman Jocelyn Pulgueras and Alliance for Nationalism and Democracy (Anad) congressman Pastor Alcover—were smearing the image of the city.

Abellera said a powerful political clan was behind Pulgueras and Alcover, known anti-communist leaders. He refused to identify who the politicians is.

Abellera said Pulgueras and Alcover have been consistently smearing the city.

He cited one radio interview during which the two painted Davao City as a danger zone place to live in mainly because of the killings of crime suspects by the so-called Davao Death Squad (DDS).

"I can't help but feel resentment over what I heard during the interview," said Abellera. "They just kept on yapping about the city being a dangerous place."

"It is sheer arrogance for them to say so. It is unfair to mean the trash where they leave their crime Davao City," said the councilor, who chairs the city council's committee on peace and order and public safety.

Alcover, replying to Abellera, attacked Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, flying suggestion that he and Pulgueras raid target was Duterte.

"Contrary to Mayor Rody Duterte's claim, Davao City is not and has not been as peaceful, lawful and orderly as he wanted the people to believe," said Alcover in a statement e-mailed to the Inquirer.

"The last time more than 952 people, mostly from the lowly class of the working were summarily killed in the city during his 20-year administration, and none was bailed to court to answer the murders, proves that criminal justice system is now really working in Mindanao's prime city," Alcover said.

Another councilor, Danilo Ikenaghing, also assailed the smear campaign. He said the report that Pulgueras and Alcover were getting from their political giants away like mad men in their attacks against the city.

Gerardo Sabenas, another councilor, said the "presence of Pulgueras and Alcover in the city is alarming."

"They are confirming the mind of the people that Davao is not safe," said Sabenas. *Jeffry M. Tegios, Inquirer Mindanao*

NEWSBRIEFS

■ ILAYAP

Quake jolts provinces

A 5.3-MAGNITUDE quake shook this province and Catanduanes on Thursday, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) yesterday.

Phivolcs said the quake's epicenter was 148 km northeast of Catanduanes and its aftershock caused only the Philippine branch. No damage or injuries were reported.

Roy M. Stead, Inquirer Southern Luzon

■ PANGASINAN

JDV calls for summit

FORMER SPEAKER Jose de Venecia Jr. said he will call for a summit among political parties to draft a plan on succession if elections failed in May.

He said he would want to sit down with President Macapagal-Arroyo, Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile and Speaker Prospero Nograles. So Nemesia had a falling out with Ms Arroyo over corruption issues.

"We have to convince (Ms Arroyo) on this. Whether she listens or not, that's for problem," said De Venecia.

He said the summit should be able to settle who should be acting president if no president is proclaimed on June 30.

"At least we will have an acting (one) president, not a military rule," he said.

Yolanda Zafalla, Inquirer Northern Luzon

■ ORIENTAL MINDORO

Calamity state stays

THE TOWN of Naujan, Oriental Mindoro, has remained under a state of calamity after the number of villages hit by floods was raised from 28 to 41 on Monday, the Office of the Civil Defense (OCD) said on Tuesday.

Of the 79 villages in Naujan, 41 remain flooded, according to Edgar Posadas, OCD chief in Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan). In Baco town, 14 villages were also flooded.

Virtuoso said the state of calamity "normally stays for a year unless revoked." One person was dead and one was missing in the town.

Marlon Cinco, Inquirer Southern Luzon

■ NUEVA ECIJA

Mayor unopposed

THE INCUMBENT mayor of San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija, is running unopposed in the May 10 polls for the first time it would happen in the town.

Mayor Fredie Bote Bagatin was credited with having completed 37 infrastructure projects, which included roads and bridges, during his term. It gives rivals also credited Bagatin with scholarship programs for the youth of his town.

■ CEBU

Korean held for drugs

POLICE ARRESTED a Korean national for possession of illegal drugs inside a hotel room in Cebu City on Tuesday.

Police identified the suspect as Kim Se-young, 38. SPO1 Francisco Balaoing arrested Kim at the Waterfront Cebu City Hotel and Casino in Barangay Lahug.

At least 22 packs of suspected shabu were found in the possession of Kim, the drug Police said.

Dido Arguer, Inquirer Visayas

In Iloilo, Gibo bats for more UP funds

By David Israel Sinay
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—PHILVOLCS DIRECTOR Salvador Britanico has urged members of the University of the Philippines community extraordinaire to support the candidacy of Gilbert "Gibo" Teodoro, standard-bearer of the Lakas-Kampi, who vowed to allocate more resources for state universities and colleges if he became president.

"When I house to that UP president and students are for Teodoro," said Britanico, representing the Barisig party-list group.

"My choice of Gibo Teodoro] is dictated by the qualifications of what the next president of the country should be," he said.

'Most intelligent'

He said he considers Teodoro as "the most intelligent" among the candidates.

Director's visit to Iloilo City on Monday. Teodoro said more resources were needed to strengthen the UP tradition of excellence "because we are no longer aligned with the compensation compromises of other countries."

"My times in UP taught me not to be a bigot or a hypocrite," a statement quoting Teodoro in Iloilo said.

Teodoro finished law at UP topped the Bar in 1980 and went to Harvard.

It was important for the next president, he said, to maintain UP as a "bastion of freedom and civil rights."

The biggest obstacle to the achievement of national aspirations is the lack of strong institutions that produce quality educated people," Teodoro said.

Democracy leader

With strong institutions like UP, he said, the Philippines can be a leader in the Asia-Pacific region.

"We can be the purest and fullest democracy in this part of the world and be an example to others," he said.

Teodoro's ranking in surveys has not moved up, but his camp said machinery could deliver the votes for the administration candidate.

Most incumbent local officials, the Teodoro camp said, have remained loyal to the Lakas-Kampi coalition and are solidly supporting the candidacy of the former defense secretary.

LAKAS-KAMPI presidential bearer Gilbert Teodoro mingles with students during a campus tour in Iloilo City last Jan. 15.

Erap says thanks at Mass; bishop frowns on rerun

From page A1

The second division of the Commission on Elections (Comelec) ruled on Wednesday that Estrada was not covered by the constitutional provision barring a president from reelection, because he was not a sitting chief executive nothing a second term.

Bacani against candidacy

A spiritual adviser of Estrada said he did not want the former president to run again because the country needed change.

Newsbreak Bishop Emeritus Teodoro Bacani, a member of the 1986 Constitutional Commission that drafted the 1987 Constitution, said the drafters may have unwittingly left a "gap" that would allow Estrada to seek reelection.

"Personally, it's not OK with me that he would run again because the country needs genuine change, a new leader who will lead us," said Bacani.

Estrada, elected president in 1998, was ousted in January 2001 while he was standing trial for corruption and other charges after he was impeached. He was convicted of plunder in 2007 but was pardoned by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Bacani said another Estrada presidency might lead to a repeat of what the people had gone through.

Let voters decide

But the bishop said he accepted the Comelec decision to leave it up to the voters to decide whether they want Estrada again to be president.

Although I believe that the contention was really moot on hearing all who have held the post of president from running again, there is still a small opening that allows Erap to run again," he said in a phone interview.

Article VII Section 4 of the Constitution states: "The President shall not be eligible for any reelection. No person who has succeeded as President and has served as such for more than four years shall be qualified for election to the same office at any time."

The Comelec second division dismissed the disqualification cases against Estrada, saying it would just let the people decide if they want to elect Estrada again.

Red and yellow equal orange

Estrada told reporters that he could now go all out in his campaign for reelection and not have his "orange" color.

"There's been my color since 1986. I have a reason for using orange. I doubt if the other presidentiables remember but a reason for using it," Estrada said, adding a quip at Sen. Manny Villar who is also using the color for his presidential campaign.

He pointed out that for him, orange was the color of unity. "In 1986, President Marcos used the color red, while President Aquino used yellow. Mix both and you have orange," Estrada said.

Birthplace

During his brief speech at the Mass, Estrada said he chose to offer his thanksgiving in Tondo since it was where he was born and where he first started his career in the public eye.

"This is my thanks to the Lord for giving me a Comelec decision allowing me to run again. We were given a chance to serve our countrymen," he said.

Estrada regretted the people not in Tondo despite the hardships they were facing, citing his experience in detention while he was standing trial for plunder charges.

"I thought it was the end of my world. But I never lost hope and just prayed," he said. "If we believe in the Lord, nothing is impossible."

Never having to say sorry

With Estrada during Mass were his wife and former Sen. Lei Ejercito, his running mate Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay and several of their senatorial candidates.

Binay maintained that the removal of Estrada from Malacañang nine years ago was "unconstitutional."

"Sorry for the Constitution's means never having to say you're sorry," Binay said in a statement yesterday marking the Edsa II uprising in 2001, which deposed Estrada. With a report from Ellen Tordesillas

BIG BOOST Former President Joseph Estrada leaves the Sto. Niño Church in Tondo after attending thanksgiving Mass. Estrada was allowed by the Comelec to run for president in the May 10 elections. AJH NONATO

IN THE KNOW

THE GOLAN HEIGHTS is a rocky plateau in the Middle East bounded by the Jordan River and the Sea of Galilee on the east.

The 1,710-square-kilometer area became part of Syria after World War I but was occupied by Israel during the 1967 Six Day War. Syrian troops and most of the Arab inhabitants were forced to flee the area.

The Golan Heights gives Israel an excellent vantage point for monitoring Syrian movements, and serves as a natural buffer against military attacks.

It is also precious one-third of Israel's water supply. Currently there are about 20,000 Israelis and 20,000 Syrians in Golan Heights.

In 1973, Syria tried but failed to retake the Golan Heights from Israel. The following year, the two countries signed an armistice, leading to the establishment of a buffer zone to be monitored by the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF).

In a move condemned by the international community, Israel annexed Golan Heights in December 1981.

Talks between Israel and Syria were initiated, but these were put on hold in September 2008, following Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert amid allegations of corruption.

The new Israeli government elected in February 2009 has indicated that it might be willing to begin peace talks regarding the Golan Heights issue.

In June 2009, a total of 326 Filipino troops joined the UN peacekeepers in Golan Heights, the Philippines' biggest deployment of peacekeepers to eight years. Cyril J. Bonabouhr, Inquirer Research

Sources: www.bbc.co.uk, www.britannica.com, www.un.org, Inquirer Archives

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RP general named commander of UN force in Golan Heights

From page A1

That's one of the reasons why he voted for the Philippines to take command," he said.

His designation comes at a time when another contingent of Filipino peacekeepers is facing what may be its toughest challenge yet—in recovery and relief reaction to earthquake-devastated Haiti. The group has lost three members in the Jan. 12 tremor.

Iranina will replace Maj. Gen. Wolfgang Jilke of Austria as head site of the three established UN peacekeeping operations in the world.

"The Philippines is honored to have been given the responsibility of helping oversee the peace in this part of the Middle East," said Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, who presented Iranina in a press conference.

Involving the locals

"My Filipino are composed soldiers," Iranina said. "The one-year thrust of the UN is military peace operations involves making sure that you involve the locals so that the peace there will be sustainable."

Iranina, however, was quite reserved in his remarks particularly during the press conference with Romulo.

"I'm not very excited but very honored to represent the Philippines and work with the peace lawyers who have demonstrated such a capacity," he said. "But as they say, less talk, less mistake, to talk, no mistake."

Third generation

A member of Philippine Military Academy Class of 1981, Iranina is currently the deputy commander of the Philippine Marine Corps and the commander of Marine forces in the southern Philippines.

He previously served as commander of the Presidential Guards Battalion, assistant chief of staff for operations of the Presidential Security Group, and commander of the 3rd Marine Brigade.

His predecessor was a major general in the defunct Philippine Constabulary, while he is the was a major general in the Philippine Air Force.

Iranina's appointment came almost 10 years after another Filipino, Army Maj. Gen. Jaime de los Santos, was named commander of UN peacekeeping forces in East Timor, the country noted.

It also came three months after the Philippines deployed a 100-member engineering battalion to the Golan Heights to assume peacekeeping responsibilities previously handled by Poland.

23rd top troop contributor

Established by the Security Council at the end of the Arab-Israeli War in 1974, UNDOF is tasked to maintain the ceasefire and supervise the disengagement of Israel and Syrian forces and the so-called Areas of Separation and Limitation between the two countries.

The Philippines has a long peacekeeping tradition dating back to 1963 when it deployed a squadron from the Philippine Air Force to support UN operations in the Congo.

As of December 2009, the Philippines was 23rd in the UN list of top troop contributing nations.

The country has a total of 1,306 officers and personnel from the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police serving in Afghanistan, Côte d'Ivoire, Darfur, Golan Heights, Haiti, Kashmir, Liberia, Timor-Leste and Sudan.

Editor Rodolfa S. Mañebrera
Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Dichoso

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Barangay Ginebra	5	11
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GAME TODAY (Araneta Coliseum)
6 p.m.—Alaska vs Air21
Ginebra vs Talk 'N Text
7:30 p.m.—Purefoods vs Coca-Cola

Last card for Aces versus Elasto Painters today

By Mycaeng R. Castillo

SEMIFINAL TICKET

ANTIPOLO—ONE LAST TRY FOR ALASKA

The Aces use the last of several chances to get into the MC PBA Philippine Cup semifinal round automatically today when they clash with Rain or Shine at the close of the elimination round in the Ynares Center here.

Ginebra is 5 p.m. rookie Eric Arao needing a win to avoid being dragged into a playoff that could involve two other teams.

Purefoods and Coca-Cola fought to a crucial encounter at 7:30 p.m.

If the Aces fall yet again and the Tender Juicy Giants lose the Bolts, there will be a three-team playoff for the No. 2 semifinal slot among Alaska, Purefoods and Barangay Ginebra.

Rain or Shine, on the other hand, will be shooting for the first of two wins it needs against the Giants to advance to the quarterfinals outright.

At 10-7, the Bolters can tie Purefoods and idle Talk 'N Text for the No. 4 and 5 slots with a victory. They would get quite a bye, though, in a three-team playoff if they don't beat the Giants by at least 47 points.

In the case of a three-team playoff for the last two quarterfilled spots, the team with the highest quotient will assume the No. 4 ranking, leaving the next two to slug it out in a knockout contest to determine No. 5.

Meanwhile, Talk 'N Text's victory over San Miguel last Saturday in Zamboanga may upset hold by members of the board, who reached an amicable settlement of the protest filed by Jose Miguel's management last Monday.

The Office of the Commissioner turned down the interlocking dumpster Tropang Texters' 99-93 win for going to the venue with the wrong uniform, thus delaying the start of the game by one hour.

Smart Gilas-RP pips Egypt's Al Jazeera

By Jose Mesiaro

DUBAI—THE SMART GILAS Philippine national team fought back from 13 points down to nip Al Jazeera of Egypt, 82-79, last night and advance to the semifinals of the 21st Dubai International basketball tournament here.

Marcus Fernaez scattered 24 points and Chris Tiu found five of his three throws in the last 1:43 to earn the Smart Gilas cwards a semifinal date against Lebanon's Al Riyadi before a capacity crowd of mostly overseas Filipino workers at the Al Ahli Club.

"We threw games that we won, we played with a big heart," said RP coach Eddie Tomeras, who opted for a zone defense that finally stymied the Egyptians after they made a 50-24 lead to the second quarter.

"But still, we're not satisfied. We want to go to the finals," added Tomeras, confident that Smart Gilas could pull a surprise against Al Riyadi, a team with five American imports, including 7-3 Ben.

Gilas, earlier tapped for intimidation by Smart Gilas, was reduced by 6-foot-11 Jamal Simpson, who was knocked in the set, and half against Al Jazeera due to a battle royal.

But the rest of the Filipinos stepped up with the 6-7 Jason Ballesteros holding his own against the rugged and tall Al Jazeera frontline and Jeff Cesar, Mark Barroca and Mauro Lecaroz playing key roles in the second half.

"It's amazing how we did it," said Tomeras. "These things showed the character of this team."

Barroca, who won his match-up against the 6-foot-10 Jamal Mosli, unloaded for his nine points in the fourth quarter to give Smart Gilas the lead for good, 77-75.

Then Tiu secured the win on the charity line to the delight of his cheering compatriots.

Fernaez and Lecaroz combined for 23 points while Tiu and Cesar had nine each for Smart Gilas, which finally caught up with Al Jazeera at 40-all early in the third quarter.

Jamal Gilas actually took an early 14-6 lead but 15 straight points by the Egyptians through Mosli and Sherif Ganesh boosted Al Jazeera to a 21-14.

The lead grew to 15 points before Smart Gilas struck back with a barrage of threes and mid-range jumpers from Cesar, Barroca, Lecaroz and Bonnett.

MEMORIES of the Smart Gilas-RP five celebrate their hard-earned victory against Al Jazeera to gain the Final 4

M'weather fears losing—Pacquiao

By Ray Lauzon

MANNY PACQUIAO RARELY is known to relish fighters he can effortlessly outclass. But Mexican superstar Erubiel "Erik the Filipino superstar accused unbeaten American Floyd Mayweather Jr. of ducking him for fear of losing.

Through his press conference appearances primarily held to drum up interest in his March 13 showdown with Ghanaian Joshua Clottey at the Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas, Pacquiao couldn't dodge questions about his lorded super fight with Mayweather.

Pacquiao said Mayweather was unready to blame for the cancellation of the fight which eventually led to Clottey getting a crack at his World Boxing Organization welterweight crown.

"I understand Mayweather is making excuses to cancel the fight," said Pacquiao. "It is not the case making ability to cancel the fight. The main thing is he doesn't want to fight."

Unable to take his arms-length obligations from the Mayweather camp that he as a performance-enhancing drugs, Pacquiao took a pot-shot at Floyd Sr.

"I think Mayweather is scared to lose, you know? He's scared to lose," said Pacquiao, referring to Mayweather's 40-0 record.

Pacquiao said he'd rather target Mayweather next because Clottey, who is taller by two inches and holds a 5-inch reach advantage.

FAST WEATHER: He made ability to control fight, says Pacquiao.

Clottey is also supposed to enter the ring at least 12 pounds heavier than Pacquiao, who fought at 147 lbs. when he dethroned Puerto Rican Miguel Cotto last November.

At 30-0, Pacquiao refused to downplay Clottey's chances.

"He's tough. He can take a punch. He can stand and fight toe-to-toe. I don't want to underestimate Clottey," said Pacquiao.

Clottey said his edge in weight means nothing.

"Forget about the weight. Forget about how big I am," said Clottey. "What's in front of me, then he's too small in front of me; you can't even see him."

The key, according to Clottey, will be his defense and the fact that he knows how to handle a southpaw like Pacquiao.

"One thing I know about me is that I know how to handle a southpaw," said Clottey. "I've worked with a southpaw [Cotto] before."

BOX reports from All Boxing.com

La Salle pays tribute to Franz, manager

By Cedrik P. Tejon

FUNERAL: Former coach "has not fallen as a spiritual guide," Romero and Cayetano.

I KNOW I'D HAVE LEAVING LA Salle didn't come easy for someone who spent the past decade managing and gameplans, studying topics and preparing for practices.

"I think I will have mixed emotional symptoms," former La Salle coach Franz Pumaren said jokingly Wednesday night.

"It's been a normal routine for me to wake up early for the whole day preparing for a particular to already an event for me. After necessary months of not attending practice, you still long for it."

Pumaren, who steered the Archers to five UAAP titles in 11 years, including four straight from 1998 to 2002, is focusing on his bid for a congressional seat in the third district of Quezon City.

"Coaching La Salle has been a very special part of my life," Pumaren, whose term runs close to the district said.

La Salle, led by president Bro. Armin Luistro and Bro. Bernie Oca, featured Pumaren and former team manager Tey Cuptican during a emotional dinner attended by former La Salle players and PBA stars Benjie Paras, Mark Gonzales, Chito Loyzaga and Joseph Yeo and current members of the team Wednesday night.

"These must have given so much of themselves to the University," Oca said of Pumaren.

"What coach Franz did to La Salle would be difficult to match," Romero, a members of the first batch of Pumaren's straight crowns, said to PA spies. "I've learned a lot from coach Franz. First and foremost, is that there's no substitute for hard work."

Pumaren's younger brother, Glenn, was also introduced during the affair as the former Archers' new coach.

"What coach Franz did to La Salle would be difficult to match," Romero, a members of the first batch of Pumaren's straight crowns, said to PA spies. "I've learned a lot from coach Franz. First and foremost, is that there's no substitute for hard work."

Get to know Joshua Clottey . . . soon

SO YOU'RE NOT GETTING THE FIGHT YOU wanted.

Manny Pacquiao earner Floyd Mayweather just isn't going to happen—er—is unlikely enough now willing to give in to rush odd's contact regarding same unfinished timing.

Despite failing to escape some choice pairings in the past, leading one-side quite often incapable of any love to be more May'weather, more in the future. There's just too much anxiety and point involved for the fight to not happen.

Although [redacted] is the better bet would say.

As alternative, we've got ball-strong Joshua Clottey, a 34-bout-8 underweight to wage war against Pacquiao.

Experts and ardent followers of the fight game know Clottey's achievements and resumes: a 29-win, 3-loss and no-draw record never been knocked out; a draw, some say controversial, loss to Miguel Cotto.

Clottey goes by the sub-tigist "Grand Master," a calm moniker that feels like a desperate lesson for tough, numbers-man nicknames of fighters today.

. . .

And yet those with the millions Pacquiao has in the streets and you'll find our dear despite Clottey's high-profile fights and all-star bouts, he is still an unknown to many Filipinos.

We're not talking about the passionate fight fans that send nonsensical to the boxing forums or come up to me in coffee shops to talk about the upcoming of a close fight. They know who Clottey is.

We're talking about the Pacquiao fans who latched on to big time boxing simply because the Filipino pound-for-pound king has done what he has. Fighters has enhanced, amazing to see as serious athletes can win championships and becoming an idol to millions of us.

Many of them are not fans who can recite fight records with dates one dared to expect light highlights with both arms. They follow Pacquiao.

Those are fans who know Mayweather because that's bad fight announcements with Oscar De La Hoya and Ricky Hatton.

There would have been no problem. Introducing Mayweather, who also spent TV-mounted bouts he gives the media the round hours they need.

But enough of Mayweather for now. He didn't want Pacquiao that badly and so he will have to wait for another time.

. . .

But don't worry because, when the sensational fist starts to rise March 13 fight night gets going, we'll have to do the boxer about Clottey.

There's just the way it is now. He quiet opponent, save for Mario Ismasia Ramos, Erik Morales, Juan Manuel Marquez, De La Hoya and Hatton who were already known to Filipinos.

To name a few, we've gotten to know Oscar Larios, Jorge Solis, Daniel Ortiz and Cotto's BOX losses because Pacquiao battled against them.

Solis his supreme status across the globe. Pacquiao's spotlight rubs off mostly on unsuspecting opponents.

. . .

Get to know Joshua Clottey. In the next two months, we'll learn everything about his background, training, fight stories and plans if he gets his Pacquiao.

He's due for quite a payday but Clottey knows that the road would just be upsetting up his biggest fight of his career Pacquiao's 11-victory streak since 2003, when he lost the first-ever defeat.

And when he, we won't be using "Clottey who?" this month.

Pasay 4-cock derby today

MORE THAN P400,000 IS AT STAKE IN the Kinsolit 4-Cock Derby today at the Pasay City Cockpit, a week after the venue shipped 14 fights.

Hard Luck Yato of Binalot and sure 10 landing premier favourites over the previous base confirmed their participation.

Up next in the same arena is the Jacinto Cock 4-Cock Derby on Friday with Paul Elam and Jimmy as hosts.

The PCC also gears up for the much-awaited "Breeding Pay Derby 2010 Big Game 4-Cock Derby" on Feb. 14.

RTU sustains SCUAA charge

DEFENDING OVERALL CHAMPION RTU, Technological University lived up to its top billing with another big show yesterday in the 22nd State Colleges and Universities athletic association (SCUAA) games at the RTU quadrangle in Mandaluyong.

RTU swept all 15 gold medals at stake to both the men's and women's divisions in taekwondo while dominating the other events to cement its supremacy in the competitions.

RTU routed Technological University of the Philippines, 69-58, to take the men's basketball lead with four wins, then beat Polytechnic University of the Philippines in boxing's primordial fight flyweight, flyweight and featherweight classes.

After clinching the softball crown with a 14-0 rout of PUP, RTU picked up three wins each in both divisions of chess, then shared celebrations in both sports of athletics.

In other basketball games, PUP whipped Philippine Normal University, 101-54, for its third straight win while Manuel Polytechnic College avoided PNU, 66-54, for its first win in three games.

So battles Indian GM

FILIPINO GRANDMASTER JAYSON ELI CHIU TO BOX UP HIS CAMPAIGN in the 72nd Genoa chess tournament when he tackles Indian GM Deendu Harikrishna in the fifth round of the Sir Montague Crossmaccie Centre in Wijkaan Zee (Air Netherlands, on Thursday.

The 13-round tilt, bidding to duplicate his Group C victory in the same event last year, will handle white against Harikrishna, the 2006 world junior champion who is seeded third in Group B with an Elo of 2672.

Chiu, ranked 16th with an Elo of 2656, drew Sir Jim four matches for two points out of a possible four, good for a tie for 46th to 68th places and a full point behind co-leaders Gilb Hi Han of China and Anish Giri of the Netherlands.

Harikrishna and English GM David Howell drawn third with 2.5 each.

Sir agreed to a draw with top seed GM Arkadij Naiditsch of Germany, GM Ivan Sokolov of the Netherlands, GM Pentsulaya Neyfi of India in the fourth round, all with the black pieces, and memorizes GM Vassilios Kotsilas with white in the third round.

National Chess Federation of the Philippines president Prospero "Bonti" Pichay said he expects Sir to pick up momentum in time for the crucial stages of the 13-round event.

In Group A, GM Abrar Hasan of Spain leads the way with four straight victories.

Hasan, sacrificing a bishop for two pawns, humbled GM Jan Smeets of the Netherlands in 37 moves of the Petroff (or Russian) ... Ang Asamar

WORLD SLASHER CUP

5 Group A entries stay perfect

UNBEATEN ENTRIES FROM A FORTY-big field of 320 in Group A have remained unscathed entries four straight wins going into the weekend's 4-cock championship round today in the 2010 World Slasher Cup 8-Cock International Derby at the Araneta Coliseum.

The penultimate day of action is what is billed as the "Olympics of Cockfighting" will take place in the Group B top scorers, and of another starting field of 125 entries, awaiting the opposition ahead of tomorrow's group finals.

Reigning Bulakbolan 10-Cock International Derby champion Tonny Magtibay and Boy Tecang, with their entry PAM Red Cobra Farm, lead Group A1 4 points in the derby hosted by the Pintakasi of Champions and co-presented by Thunderbird Bexan XP.

Also with perfect four wins were Pasa City Mayor Jose Palmares (3TBC Chavokies), the group of Cockfighter Magazine godfather Wilfredo Ilo (JUN 11.28), Rich Royse (Rizo Cobra Octagon BM), and 2009 Globefest back-to-back champion Peping Escobar (PTB Tecolote).

If they go all the way, Magtibay and Tecang will duplicate Gregorio Aviero's feat of winning both the Bulakbolan and the 9th old Slasher Cup titles in the same year.

Close on the heels of the five entries with 3.5 points (three wins and one draw) each are Pasadena Morning Star Masters (BM) Ilac Inhouse Abcmanila), and Ramirez of Filipino Mediators.

After the final round for Group B top scorers to meet, the highest pointers from the two groups will be crowned the 2010 World Slasher Cup titlists.

WORLD-CLASS fighting cocks battle it out at the Araneta Coliseum. ...

Serena, Venus advance; Ivanovic bows to Dulko

SERENA Williams (foreground) against Petra Kvitova

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA—DEFENDING champion Serena Williams had no problem beating Petra Kvitova 6-2, 6-3 to move into a third-round match against Carla Suarez Navarro, who ousted her sister Venus' run early at the last Australian Open.

Williams conceded four of her 11 break-point chances against No. 77-ranked Kvitova in a 67-minute match Thursday that followed his northerly after Venus Williams beat Austria's Melle Rosmus 6-2, 7-5 in the same arena.

Serena Williams has won the Australian Open every odd-numbered year since 2003, the year she beat older sister Venus in the final.

Venus, in her 19th Australian Open, has won seven Grand Slam singles titles but hasn't gone beyond the fourth round in Australia since '03.

She was spent in the second round last year by Spaniard Joanni Navarro, who beat Andrea Petkovic of Germany 6-3, 6-4 earlier Tuesday.

Ana Ivanovic, the 2008 Australian Open finalist, conceded her run of poor results (6-6 record and 0-7 OS, 7-6, 6-2 loss to Gisela Dulko of Argentina.

"It's hard. It hurts, I mean yes, for sure it will. But it's a process," said Ivanovic, who dipped from No. 1 to No. 21 and failed with a fourth-round in 2009.

US Open finalist Caroline Wozniacki of Denmark advanced 6-2, 6-1 over Julia Georges of Germany next will next play No. 29 Alona Bondarenko of Israel, who beat Yaroslava Shvedova of Kazakhstan 6-2, 6-4.

Among the women advancing were No. 7 Nicole Azarenka of Belarus, No. 8 Sara Errani of Russia, No. 20 Agnieszka Radwanska and No. 30 Li Na of China.

Back on the court where he won his only Grand Slam title, Novak Djokovic overcame an early struggle against twelve-year-veteran Mikhail Youzhny before advancing 6-4, 6-2, 6-2, 6-2.

"This court is most special because I won my only Grand Slam here," the 23-year-old Serb said of Rod Laver Arena, where he beat Roger Federer in the semifinals en route to the 2008 title.

Djokovic will next play Uzbekistan's Denis Istomin, who beat Michael Berrer of Germany 7-5, 6-3, 6-4.

Sixth-seeded Nikolay Davydenko lost 1-6, 6-3, 6-3 was very Ukraine qualifier Illya Marchenko.

Marcos Baghdatis held on to beat No. 17 David Ferrer of Spain 4-6, 3-6, 7-6 (4), 6-3, 6-1. Baghdatis will face Lleyton Hewitt, who had a 7-6 (2), 6-4, 6-1 win over Donald Young. AP

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Jazz silence Spurs a 4th time

SAN ANTONIO—CARLOS BOOZER had 21 points and 13 rebounds, leading the Utah Jazz to a fourth victory over the San Antonio Spurs in the NBA this season, winning 105-98 on Wednesday.

The Jazz hadn't won in San Antonio in a decade entering this season, but Utah can now claim two road wins over the Spurs. The site wasn't easy, but Utah prevailed in a game of wild swings.

Marvin Gordon scored 20 points for the Spurs, who used a 20-0 run to the first half to dig themselves out of their own 13-0 deficit. The Jazz then doubled that with back, and had the endurance to hang on.

Andrei Kirilenko scored 26 points for Utah.

Hornets 113, Grizzlies 111

In New Orleans, James Posey scored on a 20-ft jump with 1.1 seconds left to lift New Orleans over Memphis.

Chris Paul scored 33 of his 23 points in the last 4:30 for New Orleans, and also had 13 assists.

Rudy Gay led Memphis with 26 points. AP

Scores NBA roundup: Hawks 132, Sacramento 124; Charlotte 110, Miami 92; Atlanta 98, Portland 88; Philadelphia 89, Orlando 86; Washington 120, Detroit 82; Boston 96, Milwaukee 110; Houston 99, Indiana 90; Dallas 91, Phoenix 82; San Antonio 105, Utah 98; Los Angeles Clippers 109, Chicago 97. Reuters

Gov't, sports officials hail Arnis Law

GOVERNMENT AND SPORTS OFficials yesterday welcomed the signing of Republic Act 9850, also known as the Arnis Law, saying it will boost the development of the sport that "truly originated in our country."

The Arnis Law was signed on Dec. 11, making the martial art which features fighting sticks as the country's national sport.

"Since it is now upon which truly originated in our country, a part of our rich culture and tradition," Arnis Philippines president Raymond Velayo, who worked for the passage of the law since 1995, said before government and sports officials who gathered in a meeting yesterday at the Club Filipino in San Juan.

The Arnis Law was authored and co-sponsored by Senator Honorable Legisl. Miguel Zubiri, Richard Gordon, Blas Ruiz, Ramon Revilla Jr. and Aquilino Pimentel Jr. Congressman Jordan Pidgay Jr., Pryde Henry Teves, Conz Johnson Huberty Cascio Dana and Nancies Anat ago III also backed the law.

With the passage of the law, the sport becomes a Physical Education course for the Department of Education (DepEd).

Arnis has also been included in the roster of events in the 2013 Palarong Pambansa.

Arnis Philippines becomes the third member of the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) and is recognized by the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC).

Also attending the meeting yesterday were officials of the POC, PSC, DepEd and National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA).

DepEd and NCCA officials acted as witnesses over the signing of the national sport during the ceremonial deliberations on the law.

Arnis was also played in the 1991 and 2005 Southeast Asian Games, which were hosted by the country. Gutib/PJF Sapot

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MAKE WAVES Dagunlan flashes the thumbs-up sign after recording the fastest clip by a lady drag racer.

Go takes drag's Pro class via back door

By George Lizares
Contributor

ANTHONY GO BOUNCED back from the lower bracket to take the Pro class in the Asian Mantil 20.81 National Drag Racing Championship Series® and Philippine Drag Racing Championship-Northern Series recent drag held recently at the Clark International Speedway.

A loss to Mark Molina in the first round relegated Go to the lower bracket where he teamed back Steve Caldwell and gained a solid comeback.

Go bested teammate Ed Christopher Go in the finals with a time of 13.032 while Ed Christopher, the defending Pro class champ, missed a gasket.

Defending Sportsman champion Jonathan Tee and first leg winner John Ryan were disappointments after encountering engine troubles.

"There were probably the fastest cars (Tee and Ryan) ever done in racing," said Go. "After losing the first round, I almost gave up. But realizing it as a solid round rebuilded my fighting spirit, and gave it my best."

Mom Whee Dagunlan earned the distinction as the country's fastest lady driver when she registered the fastest all-motor (fourth single race) time of 12.889 seconds.

Ed Christian struck in the Quick 8 division, rallying 10.320 seconds to prevail over Molina (11.395 seconds) in their final encounter. Mom Tee took third place.

For complete standings and results of Bio Clark-sanctioned events, log on to www.bioenginetechph.com.

Paving the Way for Philippine Football, Are You Ready for the UFL?

By Jocco Jamberg

Football has truly arrived in the Philippines with the conception of the Football Alliance and their vision to take the game to a level never before reached in our country. By bringing the United Football League, which has been running for the past eight years in a different capacity, to a higher and more professional standard, footballers around the country now have a venue where they can strive to showcase their talent, creativity and skill.

With 16 teams, two tightly-contested divisions, and glory waiting to be snatched for those who triumph, the UFL is ready to display all the reasons why the beautiful game of football is the most widely followed and played throughout the world.

For those who were privileged enough to catch the inaugural UFL-LBC Cup unfold last year, there will be no surprise if the imminent start to the league is something that has stirred high expectations and immense anticipation. In the two-month long tournament, where Air Force Raiter were crowned Champions in an all-AFP final, spectators were treated to a plethora of nail-bitingly close matches brimming with passion and teamwork.

With a transfer window, where clubs can drop and add players to their squads, implemented before the start of the league as well, it is to be expected that teams will be even stronger and more well prepared when the league kicks off this weekend.

The 24th of January is when all the action gets underway. Check www.footballalliance.ph for the schedule of the eight meeting matches to be played.

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DID YOU KNOW

CUARO M. Recio Avenue in Manila used to be part of Paseo de Azkipa, named after Pitáka II of Spain. Paseo de Azkipa was divided into Paseo de Azcárraga, General Izquierdo, Paz, Milford and Ma. Paseo de Azcárraga is now known as Recto
Cyril L. Bolalevis Jayzer Rosario

Blogger faces libel charge filed by NBI

Entry had references to DSWD holding on to relief goods for victims

By Julie M. Aurelio

A BLOGGER WHO WROTE about relief goods stored in a warehouse that allegedly did not reach victims of Tropical Storm "Ondoy" last year has been charged with libel for the malicious accusations on her website.

In a referral letter to the Quezon City prosecutor's office, the National Bureau of Investigation filed the libel complaint against the blogger upon the request of then Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral, the area's highest secretary.

The NBI identified the female blogger, who claimed to be a book author using the aliases "Jade Green Stone," "Jade Green Water Dolor," and "Ella-Rose delos Santos."

Cabral asked the NBI last year to investigate the identity of the blogger after reading a blog entry entitled "Sandos pa ang mga taong patay na ang kabaon? (What good is help that comes if it is too late)."

The entry, posted on Nov. 23, 2009, contained "malicious imputations against her, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, and its employees."

"The article alluded that she and the DSWD employees are corrupt, having diverted donated goods for personal gain at the expense of the typhoon victims and downright incompetent," the NBI said in its referral.

The blog contained uploaded photos of unopened blankets and mats donated by foreign agencies stored in the warehouse. The blogger said they were not included in the relief bags she and fellow volunteers were asked to pack.

The NBI learned that one of the volunteers who helped in the repacking was "Ella-delos Santos."

Before Santos was subpoenaed by the NBI to give her side of the story and to take a polygraph test, but the NBI said the woman did not appear on the scheduled dates. It also checked with the hosting company of the domain name www.ellagarcia.com and found out that the hosting contract with "Ella-Rose delos Santos" or "Ellagarcia" has been terminated since December 2008.

Another check with the publishing company which allegedly published the blogger's book revealed that Ella and Jade "are one and the same person," based on the way the author writes or e-mailed the blogger.

Cabral earlier claimed the items were not missing as the blogger alleged. The NBI noted that the blogger never visited the warehouses , and that it was another person who took the pictures uploaded to the blog.

"If Dolor is sincere in bringing out the alleged corruption concerning the distribution of relief goods, she should have requested an investigation from the Office of the Ombudsman or any law enforcement agency," the NBI said.

NATIONAL TREASURE
The University of Santo Tomas campus on España Street, Manila, will be declared part of the National Cultural Treasure by the National Museum on Jan. 23, in recognition of UST's key role in the nation's cultural history.
JAYZER ROSARIO

Soon, a unified traffic code in Metro

By Miles Morales

METRO MANILA MAYORS PINAGSUNOD to sit down with the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and are coming close to implementing a common traffic code for the National Capital Region.

MMDA chair Oscar Inumerez yesterday announced that the mayors forming the Metro Manila Council approved the proposal adopting a unified traffic law which will be implemented in the region. A technical working group has been created to study the details of the plan.

"We will now be using a common traffic ticket that will carry the logo of the MMDA and the corresponding LGUs using it," Inumerez said in a statement.

Local governments at present enforce their own traffic codes, and fines for violations vary from city to city. On the other hand, the MMDA also issues traffic violation tickets in urging motorists.

And while local governments still confiscate licenses of traffic violators, the MMDA has done away with the practice, and simply issues tickets with the corresponding fine one can pay at the bank.

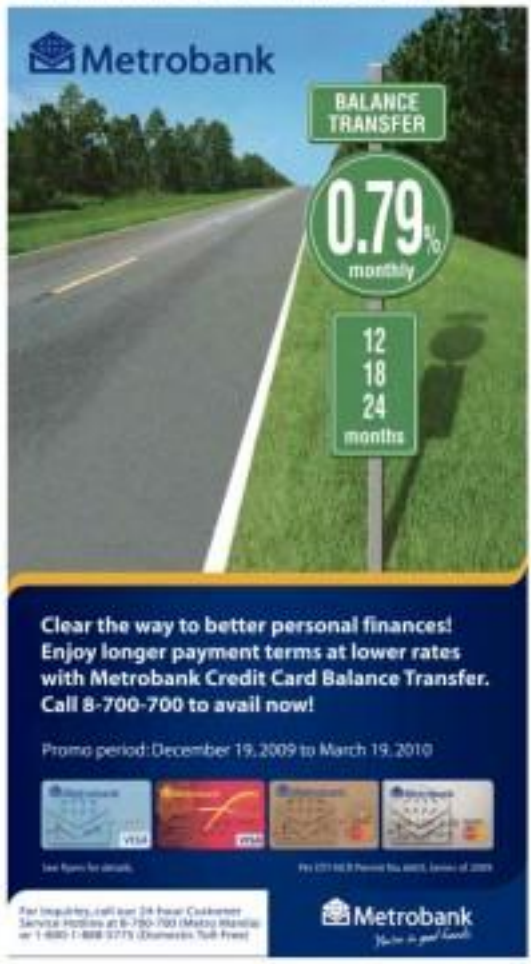
Transport groups have long contended that having multiple agencies issuing traffic tickets is a burden for drivers, given the different rates each violation carries.

Inumerez said that among the things discussed in the meeting was the uniform ticketing scheme as provided by the MMDA charter. The scheme sets a standard ticket for traffic violators in the metropolis.

Inumerez said the agency will submit to the technical working group a proposal of Taguig Mayor Freddie Tinga that calls for a revenue-sharing scheme from the collected fines.

The MMDA chair also agreed to the proposal of the mayors to delegate the powers of deputizing all traffic enforcers to the LGUs.

He maintained that the proposal/s have yet to be fully adopted, adding that it is only after another round of meetings and consultations before the changes could be adopted into a resolution and eventually implemented.



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QC cops to take refresher course on surveillance

By Nancy C. Carvajal

THE QUEZON CITY POLICE district's top official yesterday denied reports that 37 policemen, including seven officials, were relieved for failing to arrest road rage suspect Jason Ivler, but said the head of the intelligence unit has been grounded.

"There is no relief order, but we have initiated our own investigation on the lapses so those will not be repeated," Chief Supt. Elmer Ben Diego, QCPD district director said in a press conference.

San Diego added that all the policemen involved in the investigation and manhunt operation would be handed sanctions "will undergo a refresher course on surveillance techniques and methods."

The remaining progress will start on Monday and will last for a week.

Explanation

San Diego admitted he had been asked by the National Capital Regional Office head, Director Roberto Rosales, to explain "the failure of intelligence on the Jason Ivler case."

The police official also announced that Supt. Nestor Abelar, chief of the QCPD intelligence division, is being investigated and had been asked to "step aside" while the probe was ongoing.

Sr. Insp. Robert Ambe, deputy chief of the DIU was temporarily taken over Abelar' post, he said.

"We will not tolerate lapses or inefficiency in our personnel and will upwardly unveil our without regret, regardless of rank or position, all those who fail to come up with the high standards of the QCPD which has been the best police district for the past three years," he said.

Lapses

San Diego said Sr. Supt. Clarissa Cabrera, QCPD's chief of the Operational Staff, has been assigned to head the special investigation task group created to look into the alleged lapses in the manhunt.

The district director added that administrative charges will be filed against policemen found to be incompetent.

In the same event, San Diego also explained that his men were present during the raid at the house of Ivler's mother, Marlene Aguilar Pollard, leading to the suspect's arrest.

"We were there, but the lead team was the SIG," he explained.

DOJ recommends filing of charges vs Makati firm for owing ₱143.9M

By Konrad W. Domingo

THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE has ordered the Bureau of Internal Revenue to sue a Makati-based engineering firm for not paying ₱143.9 million in taxes from sales made in 1999, a BIR official said today.

Deputy Revenue Commissioner Gregorio V. Catalan so said Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito R. Zuño, acting on the complaint filed by the BIR, has recommended the filing of charges against Doctor Frederico O. Lubrico, Erdee H. Laguna and Rosalinda D. Mendoza, the president, vice president and treasurer, respectively, of ACL Industries Inc. (ACLI).

Citing a seven-page DOJ resolution, Catalan said the DOJ found valid the BIR's investigation on ACLI's alleged tax evasion activities. The firm sells engineering equipment, materials and supplies.

The BIR said investigators under its Run After Tax Evaders (RATE) Program, found that ACLI earned ₱3.45 million or P111.11 million in June 1999 from the sale of construction tools and equipment to Robin International Ltd.

The BIR investors also found that while Robin International had settled its tax dues related to the transaction, BIR records showed ACLI did not declare the sale in its corporate income tax return for 1999.

"After our thorough investigation, it was ascertained that there was a deliberate attempt on the part of ACLI to defraud government of taxes, vital income which would have otherwise been used by government for public services," Catalan said.

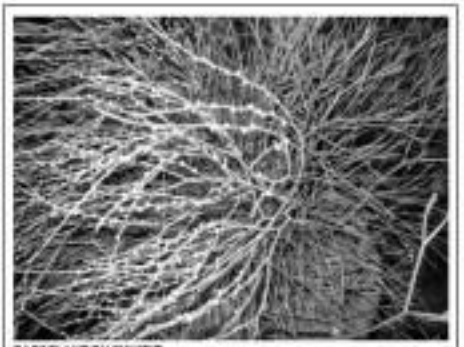
In December, Revenue Commissioner Jose L. Tan Torres said the BIR would intensify its RATE program in 2010, especially as the agency strives to meet a ₱1.0-trillion collection target of P850 billion.

In 2009, the BIR fell short of its monthly target, resulting in a shortfall of ₱5.0 billion for the entire year.

Also last month, Calimlim said the RATE program was running very smooth and had transmitted into a nationwide campaign.

The lawyer said that under the RATE program, four new cases were filed last year in the Department of Justice, including a ₱95-million tax evasion case against the Quezon City-based Techpacific Computer Corp. and a ₱126-million case against Cebu Shipbuilding and Dockyard Co. Inc.

"This is in addition to the previously filed 26 cases in the DOJ," he said.



RARE PLANT ON EXHIBIT

A rare variety called Palaven nature, more popularly known as the orkid fern, will be one of the plants on exhibit at the March 20-28 Flower and Garden Show at Manila Seedling Bank Foundation corner Elba and Quezon Avenue in Quezon City. The show is open to the public from Jan. 22-Feb. 6.

METROBRIEFS

Deadline for payment of business fees extended

THE MANILA government yesterday announced that the deadline for the payment of all fees pertaining to business operations has been extended to Feb. 25. According to acting Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso, the move was issued to give business owners more time to settle their dues with the city government. Based on a request made by city treasurer Ysabelita Valderian, Moreno said the city council, of which he is the presiding officer, passed a resolution allowing the extension of the deadline for payment of business taxes, business permits and other regulatory fees for the current year. The deadline had earlier been set on Jan. 20. Moreno said that with the extension, there was no reason for business owners not to be able to pay their dues on time, stressing that they could avoid penalties if they pay early. He also urged said prosperity owners to avail of the 25-percent discount if they pay in full on or before Jan. 20.

Tina C. Santos

Rolando Hualda Saldaña, 76

ROLANDO Hualda Saldaña of Samut, Bataan, died on Jan. 18. He is survived by his wife, Flora Poblete Saldaña, and sons Roy, Rico and Eli. Richard C. Saldaña of the Museo de Manila University Mathematics Department. His body lies in state at the Tarlungpalla Funeral of La Paz in La Paz, Manila Memorial Park in Samut, Pandacaqui City. Interment will be on Saturday after the 3 p.m. Mass.

Mother in hot water after throwing kids into river

By Jeannette I. Andrade

HOMICIDE INVESTIGATORS OF the Manila Police District (MPD) have filed parricide charges in the City Prosecutor's Office against the 40-year-old scavenger who allegedly threw her two young daughters into the Pasig River in Binondo the other day.

MPD homicide section head Chief Insp. Erwin Margarejo said it would be up to the court to determine if an insanity defense is being invoked.

Held in custody at the MPD headquarters on Gen. Luna St. in Intramuros, Manila is Jocelyn Avila, 5, was fished out of the river at around 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday near Estero de Binondo in Binondo district.

Her body was found floating near the Jones Bridge.

Her younger sister, Jerelyn, 3, was also

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■ Economy seen growing by 4.5% /B3

Editor Raul G. Manuela ■ Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

BUSINESS

IN THIS ISSUE
■ WB paints dire picture of global economy in '10 /B4

PSALM to raise ₱20B from bond market

Agency to augment capital, settle Napocor debts

By Amy R. Remo

POWER SECTOR ASSETS AND LIABILITIES MANAGEMENT Corp. plans to raise at least P20 billion from the local bond market to augment its working capital and fund its liability management program.

PSALM said in a statement that high liquidity in the domestic market and the prevailing low interest rate environment had encouraged the agency to undertake a substantial bond offer.

Proceeds will be used to pay debts of state-run National Power Corp., PSALM president Jose Emorsolan said in a separate phone interview.

Also, PSALM plans to conduct prepayment of Napocor's obligations

PSALM B2

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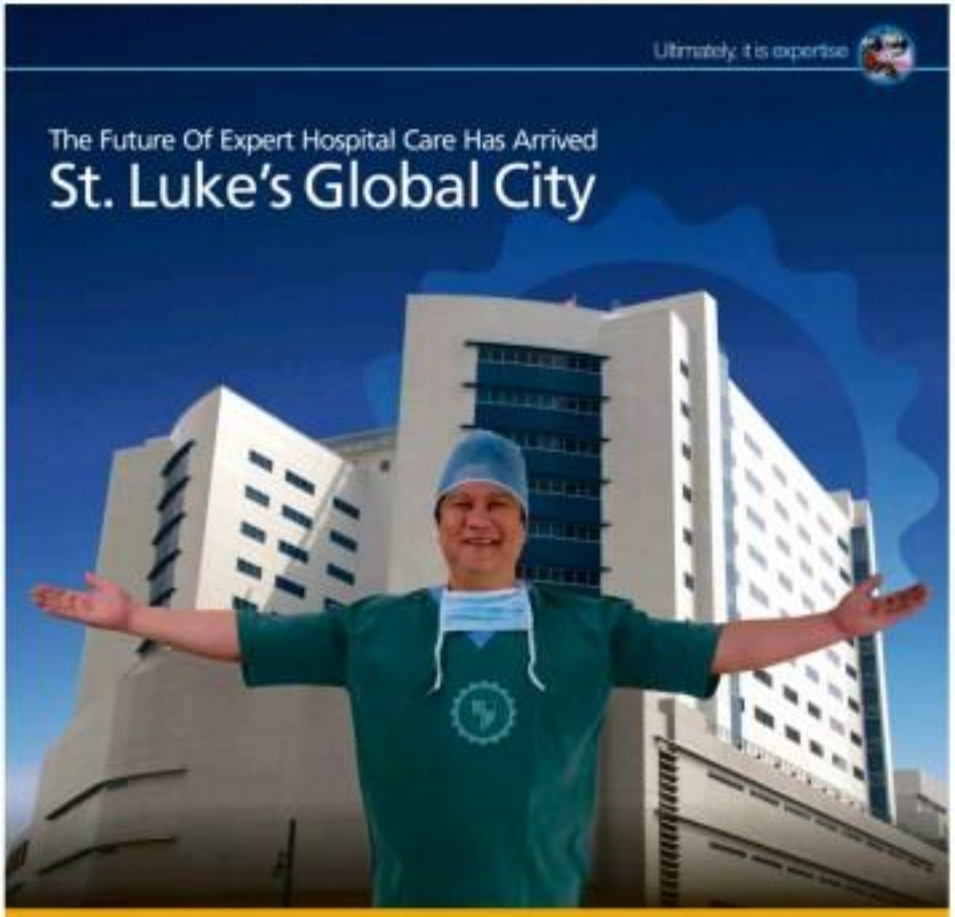

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Reverse Pac-Man strategy

NO, TODAY'S ARTICLE HAS NOTHING to do with Manny Pacquiao who, because of his string of ring victories, has earned the sobriquet Pacman, a name associated with a video game that was popular some time ago.

Rather, it's about a business strategy used in the United States during the '80s where takeover artists set their eyes on profitable, but underperforming, public corporations.

Something similar, although in reverse form, appears to be happening in the local scene.

Earlier this month, San Miguel Corp. announced its plan to acquire a 49-percent stake in Top Frontier Holdings Inc., which owns 26 percent of SMC's stocks.

Top Frontier purchased these stocks last December from the SMC Retirement Fund. The same shares were earlier bought by the Fund using some of the money lent to it by SMC itself.

Aside from Top Frontier, another major SMC stockholder is Q-Tech Alliance Holdings Inc. which owns 15.9 percent of the erstwhile fund and brewing conglomerate.

Top Frontier intends to later acquire all Q-Tech Alliance's SMC shares.

If these moves materialize, Top Frontier would wind up controlling, indirectly of its owning 26 percent ownership, 47.9 percent of SMC's stocks.

Acquisition

After this happens, Top Frontier would have to make a tender offer for the rest of the SMC shares and, in the process, further increase its holdings.

With Top Frontier becoming SMC's largest stockholder and SMC itself acquiring 49 percent of Top Frontier, SMC would become co-owner of the corporation that will have majority control over it.

Confusing? Not really.

The rather unique setup is a product of the special status that the law grants to corporations. They are given a personality *termed* judicial to differentiate it from natural persons) that is separate and distinct from that of their stockholders.

Thus, the fact that SMC is majority-owned by another corporation does not deprive SMC of its original standing as an independent corporation.

Although Top Frontier may have, for all intents and purposes, call the shots in SMC, the latter shall continue to act, and be treated, as an independent with its own set of directors, financial statements and other attributes that arise from having its own certificates of registration.

The plus factor for the arrangement is SMC's management appears to be in good terms with the controllers of the company that is poised to gain majority control over SMC.

Buyout

If it were otherwise, a fight for control over SMC (which can be nasty and expensive considering the huge financial resources of the contending parties) would be inevitable.

Before, when hostile takeover moves were in vogue in the US, one of the measures used by threatened businesses to head up that action was the so-called Pac-Man defense.

By way of background, in the Pac-Man video games, the character that is able to swallow all his opponents emerges as the winner.

Using the same approach in a hostile takeover, if a company is suspected to be planning to gain control of another company and that action is opposed by the target company, the latter fights back by buying majority of the stocks of the "invader."

Faced with this counter-strike, the unwanted takeover would either be forced to end the takeover effort or buy out (at a higher price, of course) its stockholders who may be inclined to sell their shares.

The outcome would be financially disastrous to the rebuffed company. It would be saddled with the target company's stocks that it may not be able to sell for a profit, or the buyout may exhaust its military weapons (meaning its objective).

Open arms

The target company does not, however, come out unscathed even if it the Pac-Man defense succeeds.

The money spent to acquire control of the intending company which includes payment for the services of lawyers and other professionals needed in its move that defense, represents substantial funds that could have otherwise been used to improve the company's business or increase its profits.

For the management of the target company, that is a small price to pay for retaining their cushy positions. Whether or not the status quo would be to the best interests of their stockholders is a different story.

Going back to the SMC-Top Frontier deal, SMC not only graciously welcomes the entry of its prospective controlling stockholder, it has even agreed to subscribe to its stocks!

That's the best vote of confidence that a target company can give to its prospective acquirer.

With the "open arms" policy the price of SMC shares in the stock market is expected to remain static, if not appreciate because of the anticipated smooth transition in corporate control.

How long that cordial relationship between the two companies will last is a big question mark.

In the meantime, the professionals whose services would have been tapped in a proxy fight between warring financial giants are probably nursing their wrath in frustration over the loss of potential professional fees and charges.

(For feedback, please write to cyanidetest@inquirer.com. pls.)

IMI share price jumps 50%

First to list on the PSE this year

By Doris C. Dumlao

ADVANCED ELECTRONICS MAN-ufacturing firm Integrated Microelectronics Inc. (IMI) rose in share price surge by 50 percent on its stock trading debut yesterday, the first listing on the Philippine Stock Exchange for 2010.

IMI, which listed on the bourse by way of introduction or without offering new shares to the public, took this move as a stepping stone for future acquisitions and in preparation to the listing of an initial public offering (IPO). This is the third contiguous tender Ayala Corp. to list on the PSE.

From an opening price of P6.20, IMI shares closed at P9.30, hitting the maximum stock price appreciation allowed to the listed market. Based on yesterday's finish, the company has a market capitalization of P7.4 billion.

In a briefing after the listing ceremony, IMI and Ayala Corp. chair Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala said the company had no need for fresh funds at this time, which was why it listed by way of introduction.

"But as we move forward, we've got some fairly aggressive plans in continuing our partnership with the company," he said.

"What's exciting at this time is we're just coming through a difficult period in the global economy. But it's beginning to turn. In this business, you don't build when it's at its peak; you start to build when it's beginning to move up," he added.

"There are some exciting plans that we're developing and depending on how it pans out, on how we see the global economy on the demand side...we'll decide on how much (Capital) we need," he said, when asked how much dilution in IMI the Ayala group was willing to tolerate.

Under PSE regulations, a company that lists by way of introduction must conduct an IPO within 12 months. In the case of IMI, the only available shares for trading are secondary shares held by individual shareholders and employees equivalent to about 9 percent of capital stock. The shares owned by the Ayala group are subject to a 365-day lock-up.

"By going public, we are hoping more people know more about IMI. They will know of how a Filipino technology firm participates in the global arena," said IMI president and chief executive officer Arthur Tan.

The company has 18 manufacturing sites, five of which are in China and three are in the Philippines. Half of its total manufacturing capacity is in China, where the facilities are nearing full capacity utilization.

It is considered a medium-sized electronics manufacturing service (EMS) provider.

Unlike an original equipment manufacturer, an EMS does not make its own products. Instead, it helps OEMs develop and manufacture their products in a cost-efficient manner.

"IMI is positive over the vast opportunities for growth in the emerging electronics industry's rebound and the assurance that electronics is a key element of the economy of the future," Tan said.

Liberty Telecom beefs up capital stock to P6.8B

By Paolo G. Montecillo

LIBERTY TELECOM HOLDINGS INC. has secured regulatory approval for the tripling of its authorized capital stock to P6.8 billion.

Liberty Telecom, which is controlled by 2nd-generation conglomerator Ilan Miguel Gotianun and partner Qatar Telecom, said it would increase its capital from P2 billion to P6.8 billion.

The increase was approved by the majority of the company's board on Dec. 9, 2009 and, recently, by the investors and Securities Commission, Liberty Telecom said.

The capital stock is made up of 1.41 billion common shares and 5.36 billion preferred shares valued at P1 each.

As disclosed last year, the increase represents the investments made by Vega Telecom Inc., a wholly owned unit of SMC, Qatar Telecom subsidiary PicTure Data Ltd. and White Dawn Solutions Holdings Inc. in Liberty.

Liberty Telecom is SMC's launch pad for its foray into the highly competitive telecommunications sector.

Earlier this month, Liberty asked the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) for authority to offer high-speed broadband Internet services using Worldwide Interoperability Microwave Access (WiMAX) technology, already offered by dominant players Smart Communications and Globe Telecom Inc.

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Gov't reviews rice import plan

By Rita T. Olchondra

THE GOVERNMENT IS RE-viewing whether it needs to import more rice given the shortage in local palay production.

After the closing ceremonies of the Coral Triangle Initiative Business Summit, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said he had directed the Interagency Committee on Rice and Corn to decide whether the country should change its programmed import volume of 2.4 million tons for 2010.

"I told them, 'give me a number,' because conventional wisdom does not hold. The BAS (Bureau of Agricultural Statistics) was saying the expected volume yields in the dry months may not be sustained," Yap said.

Yap declined to say whether the Philippines, the world's top rice importer—may call for fresh supply contracts, although he did not rule out the possibility.

"They (interagency committee) may say we are comfortable, so we need more or we have, quote" he said, referring to the current rice import cap of 2.4 million tons.

Yap said there were stalled negotiations on agricultural exports. At first, he said, exceptional areas were expected to expand as typhoon in late 2009 impacted many livelihood activities there.

However, recent data from the Philippine Rice Research Institute (Philrice) showed many farmers in seeing no benefits due to lower than expected production in financing because fuel is scarce by El Niño, a weather pattern that causes drought, and also because yields especially in rain-fed areas.

Data from the BAS showed that net production for January-June 2010 might be lower than year-ago level.

BAS projects that rice output may reach 7.25 million tons, 172,000 net lower than year's 7.38 million tons.

The agency earlier said palay production continued to 1.3 percent year on year in the fourth quarter of 2009.

Palay production for the whole of 2009 went down by 3.24 percent to 16.26 million tons from the 2008 level of 16.82 million tons. This was because typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng (Ketsana and Parma) during the fourth quarter damaged 66,000 hectares of rice fields and affected 1.4 million farmers.

BAS assistant director Mauro L. Iluminado said in November that the last time rice production contracted was in 1998, a year affected by El Niño.

Economy seen growing by 4.5%

Better than gov't target and market expectation

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE ECONOMY will likely perform better than government and market expectations this 2010 on robust recuperation inflows, London-based think tank Capital Economics said.

The think tank also says the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) is seeing up to key interest rates by a total of 100 basis points beginning April.

In a Jan. 18 macroeconomic commentary, Capital Economics projected that the country's gross domestic product (GDP) could be relatively 4.5 percent this year—higher than the government target of 3-4 percent and the consensus growth expectation of 3.8 percent. This view rests on the back of a projected 7.6 percent growth in merchandise exports.

"Modest remittance inflows should increase as the global upswing continues, even though we anticipate that the correction in the US, Asia, and Europe will fade this year. Remittance inflows picked up late last year, although this is usual ahead of Christmas, and were up 6 percent in 10-dollar terms in the first eleven months of 2009," the research said.

Government officials are praising the markets to expect that fourth quarter GDP growth will hit 1 percent year-on-year compared to 0.8 percent in the second and third quarters. The research said the improving trend should continue this year, but as expected slowdown in Asia, the first half of 2010 may seem growing less stronger than the second half.

Likewise seen supportive of better growth would be a sustained pick-up in exports, with electronics shipments leading the way. In addition, the think tank said bank lending had improved and should stay strong.

It also said monetary policy in the Philippines would likely stay "accommodative," projecting a gradual rise in the bond market yields. "We think that the BSP's borrowing rate from 4 to 5 percent over the course of this year.

Capital Economics said Philippine country credit risk would likely be in the spotlight over the next six months given that the BSP borrowing agreement could be record levels, and ahead of May's presidential and congressional elections.

"However, increased volatility looks more likely than a fiscal crisis. The government's debt burden is manageable. However, the sound policies of recent years should start to place, GDP (gross domestic product) growth will probably accelerate, and foreign exchange reserves will continue to rise," the report said.

The research said the increase in the government's budget deficit (up to P250 billion from P221 billion was "less avoidable" given the cost of rescheduling following the bad typhoons in September, as well as the promised shortfall in tax revenue. The projected 2010 budget shortfall would account for 3.5-4 percent of GDP.

Public spending was also cost-cutting ahead of the elections. Capital Economics said a fiscal crisis should be avoided. It added that the government's debt burden was "manageable" at 50 percent of GDP.

On the external position, Capital Economics said the country's current account should rise in tandem with foreign direct investments would likely increase.

"There will be periodic shortages, new problems in the bond market and trade deficit and monetary bond yields and foreign currency debt spread will probably shift higher in 2010. However, it is unlikely that the Philippines will suffer persistent fund-raising problems," it said.

But one key risk for the Philippines, the research said, was that its election could escalate ahead of the election.

"However, this risk looks low one. Security has been significantly following the bomb the last November massacre in Maguindanao. Moreover, Maguindanao is one of the poorest and worst governed parts of the Philippines. Its problems are reasonably extreme," it said.

Galoc output hits 3.6M barrels

By Amy R. Remo

PRODUCTION AT THE GALOC OIL FIELD IN offshore Palawan reached 3.6 million barrels as of end-December 2009, Otto Energy Ltd. said.

According to the Australian firm, the consortium operating the Galoc oil field delivered 18 Palawan crude cargoes and is expected to deliver more following efforts to upgrade oil, and drill for more exploration wells.

"The field continues to produce in line with expectations, and there is nothing to stop the operator to continue to improve facility performance and plans for the appraisal of the remainder of the field," Otto Energy said.

Otto holds a 33.3% percent stake in Galoc Production Co. NL, the operator of the Galoc oil field located in Service Contract 14-C in offshore west Palawan.

In the fourth quarter of 2009 alone, the Galoc oil field produced 737,767 barrels of Palawan crude and was able to deliver two shipments of about 600,000 barrels to customers.

During the quarter, Otto said it had received $3.3 million in payment from the field operator, up from the $2.79 million received from SPC a year ago. The fourth quarter payment was net of operating and lifting costs.

The company has been working with GPC to demonstrate the more effective options to increase facility reliability and uptime.

In the meantime, Otto also disclosed that seismic reprocessing under the planned Phase 2 operations had been completed and that planning for the proposed drilling of additional wells was ongoing.

Under the Galoc Phase 2 development options, Otto said the consortium targets to increase reserves by 5 million barrels of oil with six plan to drill two new wells, which were set initially to yield about 4,000 barrels of oil per day.

Three wells may be drilled in the southern portion of the Galoc structure to boost production and access undeveloped reserves.

Otto earlier said the Galoc oil field has recoverable 8 million barrels in proven contingent resources in three separate areas. The area on top of the remaining reserves of the field, estimated at some 8.4 million barrels, is of end-June 2009.

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Bond Fund - Peso	1.60950	1.60804
Managed Fund - Peso	1.68981	1.68809
Equity Fund - Peso	1.70900	1.70743
Stock Fund - Peso	0.84691	0.85015
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.50305	1.50190
Balanced Select Fund I	1.58894	1.58814
Balanced Select Fund II	1.47868	1.47844
Peninsula Fund - Peso	1.40317	1.39899
Money Market Fund - Peso	1.01857	1.01857

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PSALM to raise ...

from page B1

within the year, Ibarra added.

According to PSALM, the bond issue will likely be held within the first quarter of 2010, subject to regulatory approvals.

Last year, PSALM was able to complete two capital market transactions which were both oversubscribed by the international market.

In May, PSALM completed its first P-peso debt transaction and listed market through the issuance of global bonds worth $1.16-billion that would be due 2024.

In November the same year, PSALM again tapped the international market, raising $1.2 billion from the exchange of existing Napocor bonds maturing in 2019 and 2031, and through the issuance of new bonds maturing in 2024.

As of December 2009, PSALM had sold or conducted to sell 29 of Napocor's generation assets with total operating capacity of 3,872.2 megawatts, representing about 53.3 per cent of Napocor's generation assets in Luzon and the Visayas.

Shares ...

From page B1

For the first time this week, the main share in Philippine Stock Exchange index inched up by 0.56 percent, or 1.75 points, to close at 3,107.56.

Brokerage said investors advances to 11 to 45, while 79 remained steady. Value traded dwindled to P2.23 billion from an average of P3 billion in previous days.

Trading on Wall Street overnight was sluggish due to reports that banking regulators in China had asked banks to stop issuing new loans.

US market losses also affect local market due to new housing production.

Doris C. Dumlao

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BUSINESS

WB paints dire picture of global economy in '10

By Michelle V. Remo

Growth may wilt in 2nd half as stimulus spending fades

THE GLOBAL ECONOMY WILL SUFFER the fallout from the financial crisis for years to come, the World Bank yesterday said in a report seeing that growth may sink later this year as stimulus spending fades.

The Washington-based bank forecasts the world economy will grow 2.7 percent this year, and 3.2 percent in 2011. It contracted 2.2 percent in 2009.

"A great deal of uncertainty clouds the outlook for the second half of 2010 and beyond," the report said.

Though the "acute phase" of the crisis has passed, chronic weaknesses remain. Much depends on the timing of withdrawal from massive stimulus programs and adjustments to monetary policy, the bank said.

Mishandling could result in a "double dip," with a return to recession in 2011, it warned.

Also, the institution urged the private sector to take the lead in stimulating economies this year. It also condemned governments against high public spending and low key rates for a prolonged period.

Hans Timmer, director for development prospects at the World Bank, yesterday said in a video conference that economies across the globe will would need "pump priming," explaining that growth would likely be very modest.

Also, stimulation spending should no longer come from governments, but from private sector investments, he said. If governments were to delay the lifting of state measures to boost growth, this could lead to an asset bubble.

"The private sector should take over in leading growth of economies because there are limits to monetary and fiscal policies," Timmer said during a conference that marked the launch of the World Bank's report entitled, "Global Economic Prospects 2010."

He said if central banks were to keep interest rates at current record-low levels, this could substantially inflate prices of portfolio assets.

The economist said a private sector led demand would be ideal because it would prevent any threat of asset bubbles.

Rise in demand that is matched by an increase in supply prevents asset bubbles, Timmer explained.

World Bank senior economist Eric Lithergue said that the Philippine government should focus on reviving its declining tax collection.

Improved fiscal situation will help improve confidence of the business sector, he said.

Lithergue said that the Philippines surprised the international community for being one of the most resilient economies throughout the crisis last year.

The World Bank estimated that the Philippines grew by 1 percent in 2009 from 2.8 percent in 2008. This year, the country may grow by 3.5 percent, it added.

With a report from A7

Corruption pulls down RP freedom ranking

By Bernard W. Dantinga

ECONOMIC FREEDOM IN THE Philippines, as measured by a Washington D.C.-based think-tank's yearly Economic Freedom Index, fell by 0.5 point to 58.3, making the country 100th out of 179.

Based on the The Heritage Foundation's 2010 Economic Freedom index, prepared in cooperation with the Wall Street Journal, Hong Kong is top of the list at 89.7 points while North Korea was at the bottom in one notch.

Since the index was launched in 1995, the Philippines' overall score has remained in the range that the index tags as "mostly unfree" economies.

With a maximum score of 100 points, the index lists countries from the "free" (80 points and higher) to the "repressed" (below 50 points).

The Philippines shares the 59-59.9 points range with 54 other countries, mostly in Africa, but including neighbors Cambodia (57.8%) and Laos (55th) as well as aspiring superpowers China (134th) and Russia (143rd).

The country's decline from 56.8 points in 2009 was attributed on "small reductions in monetary freedom and freedom from corruption," The Heritage Foundation said.

These are two of the 10 criteria used in ranking the countries, with the other eight relating to freedom in business, trade, fiscal, government spending, investment, financial, property rights and labor.

Economic freedom, as the foundation defines it, "is the fundamental right of every human to control his or her own labor and property."

Compared to 2009 scores, the freedom from corruption in Philippines worsened by 2 points from 23 points.

Of the 10 components of the index, the Philippines has the worst score in "freedom from corruption" at 23 points or about halfway to the global average or 46.5 points.

"Corruption is perceived as pervasive," the foundation said.

IPPs seek resolution to tax issue

By Amy R. Remo

INDEPENDENT POWER PRODUCERS are asking the Department of Finance to help resolve the issue of real property taxes charged by local governments, which have already ballooned to unmanageable levels.

"We're urgently requesting that the secretary of finance sit down with the various affected groups whether they be local governments... [or] IPPs, to lay in arrive at a mutually acceptable solution for this issue," said Emerson Penaranda, president of the Philippine Independent Power Producers Association.

These real property taxes are levied the buildings and improvements (such as rehabilitation and construction projects) of the power facilities of the IPPs.

Penaranda noted that under the local government code, local governments can assess businesses for the computation of real estate property taxes on buildings and improvements.

"If you're a government-owned and controlled corporation, you're assessed at zero percent. However, a GOCC, depending on certain legal considerations may be allowed to be charged 10 percent of the assessed value or the book value of the asset," he explained. "But for the private sector, that can range from 1% to 80 percent of the assessed value."

Penaranda disclosed that the assessment happens only in certain provinces, which is a concern with the local government code and taxed paying real estate property taxes based on the 10 percent of the assessed value of the asset.

Local governments, however, believe it should be based on 80 percent.

9% growth in 2010 remittances seen

By Michelle V. Remo

OVERSEAS LABOURERS' REMittance Corp. experts see 6- to 9-percent growth in remittances to the Philippines this year in line with the anticipated modest recovery of the global economy from the crisis.

The remittance growth forecast exceeds the government's projection of only 5 percent.

The latest global economic turmoil, considered the worst since the Great Depression in the 1930s, led to wage cuts and layoffs that adversely affected income including those of Filipinos working in countries that fell into recession.

John Henri Uhrdiller, president of OLRC, yesterday said the company's outlook on overall remittances to the Philippines in 2010 was positive and that the likely increase in money sent by overseas-based Filipinos will drive growth of the remittance business in the country.

OLCS expects to benefit from the growth in remittances.

"We [OLRC] will continue to improve our services and strengthen our relations with our remittance partners," Uhrdiller said during the launch of the firm's "Silk Cobanna Card" held at Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

In an interview at the sidelines of the event, OLRC general manager Fernando Bacungan said the company was expecting to facilitate much more remittances this year than the level last year. Cebuana Lhuillier expects its remittance business to grow by between 26 percent and 30 percent, repeating the performance last year, Bacungan said.

OLRC earlier estimated that the 30-percent growth in remittances it facilitated last year translated to about $1.5 billion.

Bacungan said growth would be fueled by money coming particularly from the Middle East, Guam and Australia.

He said the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration recently signed an agreement with its counterparts in Australia involving the deployment of more Filipino workers in said countries.

Bacungan said Australia accepts about 300,000 Filipino workers, while Guam has expressed intention to accept 15,000 Filipinos.

OLRC, the remittance arm of JS Uhrdiller Group of Companies, intends to further build its business this year by engaging in more partnerships with foreign remittance companies and local banks.

BEST BOND OF THE BUNCH

The Philippines claimed the distinction of having issued "the best sovereign bond" during the 18th Asset Triple A Awards. The Hong Kong event was attended by (from left) Alfred Chan and Mick Pelaez of HSBC; AP Treasurer Roberto Tan; Undersecretary Jeremiah Paul Jr.; Joseph Gallagher of Credit Suisse and Martin Spyglo of Deutsche Bank.

Globe not about to open up network to VAS providers

By Paolo G. Montecillo

ASIA'S LED GLOBE TELECOM Inc. has no plans of opening up its network with 23 million subscribers to value-added service (VAS) providers.

Globe told the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) in a filing that VAS providers were not subject to the same interconnection privileges that other telecommunications companies enjoy.

Interconnection agreements allow subscribers of one network to communicate with those in the others.

"A VAS provider without a network operator as a matter of legal rights demand access to the network of a public telecommunications entity," Globe said.

The company said VAS providers—such as those that sell ring tones, photos and music—were only entitled to "be allowed only to lease or rent telecommunications network and facilities to provide such specialized services."

The position was an answer to a show cause order issued by the NTC last week, asking local telecommunications firms to explain why they should not be subjected to administrative sanctions for defying the regulator's reference access offer (RAO) rule.

A RAO is a set of documents that spell out requirements for interconnection.

This contains information such as interconnection facilities, network requirements and network charges.

Making companies' RAOs accessible to anyone, the NTC earlier said, would help ensure healthy competition by preventing big companies from leveraging their affiliates by offering cheaper interconnection fees.

Discrimination by requiring smaller rivals from competitors will also be stamped out, the NTC said.

Farmers uneasy about elections

By Ernesto M. Debalucos

FARMERS ARE UNEASY ABOUT THEIR income. This is because they have heard about the many difficulties being encountered by the Automated Election System (AES).

Last Jan. 18, the Mission Agriculture, composed of 42 federations and organizations representing all major agricultural sectors, joined the AES Watch 2010 as a convenor. Because Mission is alarmed by the findings presented by the AES panel on the Comelec's lack of preparedness, it is mobilizing all its members and constituents nationwide to support the common resolution of AES Watch: "We speak with one voice and with serious concerns about the fate of the coming elections. The Comelec is our proponent. While there is time, a contingency plan should be made to work 10/10/"

COMMENTARY

AES scorecard

The panel that worked on the AES scorecard has distinguished members with proven competence and integrity, among them are Alfredo Pascual, president of the University of the Philippines Alumni Association; Bobby Tuazon, director for policy studies of the Center for People Empowerment in Governance; Pablo Manalastas, information technology professor of the Ateneo University; Rachel Killa Rosas, dean of De La Salle University-College of Computer Studies; and Beatrice Bercelon, president of the National Union of Students in the Philippines.

The AES scorecard studied 30 areas of concern over the 2010 automated elections. Of them, not one got a passing grade. Nineteen got a warning-danger rating, while nine was listed as a watchdog. The failed rating was given "for concerns which Comelec can no longer satisfactorily deliver or remedy."

It should be noted that the failed rating was given on an element essential to the entire system: the source code. The code specifies the instructions the computer must follow in counting the votes. If the code is defective, the votes will not be counted properly.

It is precisely because the code is so important that the law requires that it be made available to "political parties or groups which may conduct their own review thereof." This way, these third parties can make the necessary code corrections to stop any contemplated rigging of election results.

The code was made available as early as October. In fact, it was given to a foreign company called System Labs, which charged our government P17 million to review it.

It is ironic that up to now, this code has not been made available to any PA. Ignos groups, as the elections. Since it was only four months for a proper review and the corresponding corrections to be made to this code. By time has passed for Comelec to comply properly with this law. This is why the AES Watch gave Comelec a failing grade in an area of such critical importance.

There are 19 other problems that have been researched and evaluated as negative by the distinguished AES Watch panel. For more information, interested parties can check www.comelec.gov.ph or call the AES Watch office at (02) 9266875.

Comelec briefing

Two days later, on Jan. 20, Atty. Augusto Agdeppa Jr. leaders participated in a Comelec briefing sponsored by Betsy Chit of New Manila East president Sol-nardo Zaluaga. It was facilitated by Dairy Confederation of the Philippines chair Emelio Bonto, with Comelec's Rhonda Dalmeo explaining the current status of Comelec preparations. Since the integrity of the vote counts is of primary concern, Mister Alcuaz raised two issues.

The first is that there should be an audit of the accuracy with which the AES count reflects the actual votes cast. It also being conducted by Comelec is that the audit would be done after the proclamation of the election winners, when the audit should be done before. Otherwise, even if the winners do not deserve their victories, they would already be in place. It would take a very long time before they are dislodged due to the necessary processes required to contest an electoral mistake.

The second concern is that the Comelec refuses to be transparent regarding showing to the public the results of each Precinct Computer Optical Scan (PCOS) count when the automated election of the PCOS results are given in a post-counting system. How can the public evaluate the accuracy of the announcement if they are not allowed to see the individual PCOS results that make up the summation?

Last Jan. 13, former Supreme Court Chief Justice Antonio Pangalinan wrote: "Comelec has come up short in its automation work ... Unfortunately, the time for automation is running out. It is time to prepare for manual election."

Last Jan. 16, Makati Business Club chair Ramon del Rosario said that Comelec "should immediately focus on the review and oversight on preparing for the best manual election it can organize."

Whether the election will be fully manual or partly automated depends largely on the joint congressional oversight committee on automated elections that will meet on Jan. 27. But whatever is finally decided, the concerns that have been identified by AES Watch and other groups should be properly addressed.

The farmers intend to be a significant force in this area, because the conduct of credible elections is their only hope for a better future.

*The author is chair of Agrisearch, former secretary for presidential flagship programs and projects, and former undersecretary for agriculture, and trade and industry. For inquiries and suggestions, e-mail agrisearch.phil@yahoo.com or mdpbc@yahoo.com or mdpbc@yahoo.com or mdpbc

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Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Eglesi

For Filipinos, shopping is the best reward

By Dominic L. Lucas

MORE FILIPINOS SEE shopping as reward for their hard work than their peers around the region, according to a study released recently by marketing communications firm Grey Group Asia Pacific.

At the same time, however, Filipinos are the most value-conscious shoppers, always on the lookout for bargains that give them more bang for their buck, the same study found.

Dubbed "Eye on Asia," the study looks at the hopes and dreams of people in 18 countries across the Asia-Pacific region and is a proprietary initiative of Grey Group, aimed at "determining the powerful underlying trends and human stories that will shape branding and communications now and in the future."

The research examines three areas of life for brands, namely lifestyle, present and future aspirations, and consumption and communications.

The study found that, for the most part, Filipino consumers ranked close to the average of the region when it came to critical issues affecting consumption behavior—except for two aspects.

According to the Grey Group's findings, Filipinos ranked the highest in terms of the number of shoppers being "perceived value seekers" compared to other countries.

In fact, as much as 61 percent of the local market were labeled as value seekers, followed by 58 percent of the Asian market who considered themselves "new brand conquerors," and 53 percent who were "function first" buyers.

Only 9 percent of Filipinos classified themselves as "status seeker" buyers while 3 percent said they were "individualistic believers."

In contrast, the opposite end of the spectrum showed that only 3 percent of Japanese shoppers considered themselves value seekers, while an overwhelming 80 percent of the Japanese market was tagged as individualist seekers.

The study also showed another unique trait of the Philippine market—that Filipinos believe, more than most of their peers, that it is necessary for mothers to work to contribute to the family's income.

The Eye on Asia survey showed that 59 percent of Filipinos either "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree" that mothers should work to help augment the family income.

This was similar to the opinions found in Vietnam which has a similar socioeconomic makeup as the Philippines.

Dhiren Ivey Bridges of the study include the fact that Asians remain optimistic about the future despite growing uncertainties. Asians are concerned about household finances and saving actively for their future, that five distinct segments have been identified across the region, mothers as "Chief Family Officers" have new challenges and conflicts with their multiplicity of roles, and shoppers pursuing shopping behaviors as an a result of the recession.

For the study, the Grey Group also conducted an in-depth retail ethnographic probe, which if businesses from service sectors must drive shopping behavior in diverse cultures and channels.

Now in its fourth year, Eye on Asia has interviewed over 10,000 people from Australia, Bangladesh, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

"The accelerating age that we live in necessitates a focus on people and brands. People in Asia are looking for symbols, deeper emotions and psychological benefits to their lives," Grey Group Asia Pacific's chair and CEO Nirvik Singh said. "Marketers should respond to this by taking a closer look at what motivates people as well as what they want from their lives in the future to create innovative, distinct and important messages."

"More than ever before, marketers need to understand people's evolving attitudes and behaviors to get ready for new opportunities when the market rebounds," he added. "Grey Group's Eye on Asia study is built on that notion that listening to and building emotional bonds with consumers will enable business owners to differentiate their brands in this Asian century."

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Turning on Filipinos to hard drinks

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THE HIGH IMPORT TAXES that the government slaps on spirits may make foreign whiskey, gin, vodka, brandy and liqueurs quite expensive, but this has not stopped Filipinos young and old from knocking back a shot or two of their favorite imported alcoholic drinks.

The Philippines is thus emerged as the largest market for imported spirits in Southeast Asia of Chivas's-based Beam Global Spirits and Wine, the fourth largest spirits company in the world and the leading imported spirits company in the Philippines.

MARKETING STRATEGY

Joey Mendoza, president and general manager of local subsidiary Beam Global Philippines Inc., attributes this performance primarily on the strength of Pandacan, Spain's leading export brandy.

Pandacan or "Brandee" in Spanish has been in the Philippines since 1902 and has generated a fiercely loyal clientele in the country, making it the flagship of Beam's extensive spirits portfolio.

Pandacan—which comes in Solera (one year), Gold Reserve (three years), Superior (three years) and Exclusive (five years)—is an entrenched in the Filipino drinking psyche that it accounts for six of 10 bottles of brandy sold in the Philippines.

"No other market in Asia likes brandy as much as the Philippines. Malaysia and Singapore like whiskey, while those in Indochina prefer cognac," Mendoza explains.

Pandacan's challenge, therefore, is to see that brand loyalty as leverage to push its other brands to consumers whose done Spanish brandy, such as Jim Beam and Makers Mark Bourbon, Courvoisier Cognac, Russian Standard Premium Vodka, The famous Grouse from Scotland, Macallan, the second leading malt whisky brand in the world, Sauza Blanco Tequila and Guillaux Liqueur.

"We are very proud of Pandacan and what we say now is the numbers like basic and momentum is that yes, we have Pandacan, but that we also have other brands that they may want to try," Mendoza tells the business.

Mendoza says Beam is specifically targeting the young drinkers, those aged 26-27 years old, because they are more likely to experiment or widen their palates to include other types of alcoholic drinks, and not just beer or brandy.

And to reach them, Beam created events.

In 2009, for example, Beam sponsored an executive band search to increase the youth's recall of Beam brands. It also were named bars and restaurants and bartended a Guitar Legend challenge, the winner of which got a free shot of Jim Beam Whiskey, among others. The latest CDs of popular artists were also given away at cutter prices.

These and other promotions have helped increase Beam's share of the bourbon market.

Beam implemented similar campaigns for the other spirits, such as the Russian Standard Vodka and ramped up efforts to forge closer ties with the distributors that every Beam's different brands.

"We elected to have a more focused approach in marketing because we have a select group of customers for our other brands. Pandacan has a more general following," explains Mendoza.

He says Beam invested in marketing campaigns in 2009 despite the economic crisis because the company believes that pulling back during a downturn is one of the worst things companies can do. That's because when things turn around—and they always do—they will be left by the wayside.

And Beam Philippines, which is proud to have the biggest market for Pandacan in the world, has no intention of going there.

Online farm lets one count chicks when they hatch

By Jeffrey M. Tupas
Inquirer Mindanao

Virtual Poultry Farming Program attracts OFWs

DAVAO CITY—WILLIE BOY BANQUERIGO, 42, is not familiar with the online real-time simulation game SimVille, but he now imagines himself endorsing on his computer while on a break from a dining chore—part of a carnival cruiser ear somewhere in Southeast Asia—and managing an actual farm in the Philippines.

Banquerigo, a resident of General Santos City that just bought a cruiselaner assuming to P50,000 that serves as the investment in the Virtual Poultry Farming Program.

The project promises him a modest investment. And he need not be drawn out the farm to supervise the business. All he has to do is to log on and enter a code, which will allow him to enter another world—the poultry farm in the Philippines all equipped with technology.

Banquerigo chose can monitor the growth of his investment and follow updates on the farm from the website.

This is his first investment after 18 long years of working overseas. He said that over the past years, all he and his family would do was to "run in (and find) chains—it's time to harness so that (until 12) time to make a profit from chickens)."

On a Sunday morning, Banquerigo and his two brothers went to the Marco Polo Hotel here to receive their shares in an investment being spearheaded by Mindanao Agro-Venture Corp. (MabaMac) and San Miguel Foods Inc. (SMFI), with the help of government agencies and finance institutions.

President Macapagal-Arroyo was on hand to witness the Banquerigos and other overseas Filipino workers receive their certificates for investing in the online farming program.

Career choice

The event marked the formal launch of the program, along with the Sulte Business Management Development Program.

Ms Arroyo awarded certificates for the Pangkabuhayan Sa Ibo Barong Projects to 26 young leaders. Also, those who were part of the Training Enhancement for Competitiveness in Biotechnology Innovative Approaches and Saba Banana Integrated Development Program received their certificates from the President.

Ms Arroyo did not give a speech during the program. Instead, she engaged the beneficiaries in a little chat...he she was talking to Banquerigo, she noted the increase of OFW remittances to $17 billion this year from $8 billion when she assumed office in 2001.

"The reason is that, not only are OFWs sending money for the subsistence of their families in the Philippines, but also for business," she said, adding that OFWs go out of the country "not as a necessity but as a career choice."

There are at least 8 million Filipinos working in different parts of the world.

Banquerigo's brother, Jacquelene, 41, a civil engineer working in Tripoli, Libya, bought two cruiselaners for the farm program. The Banquerigos applied for redeemable preferred shares that would ensure them a 7-percent dividend from their investments, no matter how the program works out.

"Lana (here one of the country that investing an something seems to be a little risky and scary," Jacquelene said of the business. "We all know that the success of an investment depends on the personal intervention of the investor. For an overseas worker like me, it would obviously be impossible for me to manage any business in the country. The farming [program] solves that problem."

Seeing everything

It is well for investors that they are able to monitor how the business is going even if they are one of the country, said the older Banquerigo.

"It is as if we are hands-on. And we get to see everything," he said.

The program paper states that the online poultry farm "will be co-owned by members of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration who have decided to become investors."

Mabalihka, also a co-owner, will manage the direction of the company. Another company, North Star Poultry Equities Inc. (North Star), has been incorporated as part of the program to operate poultry farms across the country and to "give assurance of the delivery of its poultry operations."

The SMFI's task is to market and distribute poultry products. Mabalihka has been a longtime partner of SMFI as contract breeder and grower.

Passive partners

Other partners are the Department of Trade and Industry, the Development Bank of the Philippines and the Land Bank of the Philippines.

Wenida Lua, president of MabaMac, said the role of the OWFA member investors is "passive."

"They are passive investors but they are assured of the security of their money. Their investments would be well taken care of. They are even guaranteed of a 7 percent earning from their investments," Lua said.

He also explained that the Poultry Farming Program was designed to entice more OFWs to invest in the Philippines.

"It's hard-earned money and they (OFWs) want to know what's happening to their investments. They want to know and be part of what is going on. Here, they can immediately access their business," Lua explained upon Ms Arroyo's request.

ANOTHER SM MALL IN CEBU. Mr. Hans T. Sy, President of SM Prime Holdings, Inc. hands over the check to Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña during the formal signing of the deed of conditional sale to build another SM mall at the South Road Properties in Cebu City. The Cebu City government was able to close a sale of a 20-hectare lot to SM Prime Holdings, Inc. for P2.7 billion. By turnover over a check amounting to P406 million to Mayor Osmeña to complete the downpayment of P677 million. The first structure to rise will be a shopping mall with a gross floor area of 250,000 square meters similar to the SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City. Also seen in the photo are the members of the Cebu City Council and Mr. Ron Tumas (2nd from left), VP of SM Prime Holdings, Inc.

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Seminar on soap making set

The Golden Treasure Skills Development Program will conduct a one-day seminar on soap making at the PTTC training room A and B, Department of Trade and Industry Building I (DTI-Ilocos Boulevard, corner Double Dill Pajo Avenue on Jan. 31, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Topics to be discussed include sourcing of materials, cooling and marketing strategies.

Participants will learn to make different kinds of soap, household-safe body care products through lectures and hands-on training.

Bonus courses include how to make body scrub, foot spa soap, foot spray, foot powder, hair shampoo and hand and body lotion.

For inquiries, call 896-78-28, 421-15-77 or 0949-8160-433 or 0919-811-xx-xxx or visit www.GoldenTreasureSkills.com

Ayala Land wins award

Ayala Land Inc. was recognized for excellence in a recent poll by The Asset Magazine, a highly respected financial publication in Asia.

The Asset, a multimedia publishing and research concern catering to leading corporate and financial decision makers in Asia, gave ALI the Platinum Award for All-Round Excellence in Financial Performance, Management, Corporate Governance, Social Responsibility, Environmental Responsibility and Investor Relations.

This, according to an article in The Asset website, is a new category of excellence under The Magazine's Corporate Awards.

"This award validates all our efforts in upholding the highest standards in the areas of corporate governance, social responsibility, financial management, and shareholder value creation," said ALI chief finance officer Jaime F. Yonzon.

AIM in The Economist's ranking

London-based publication The Economist released at the end of last year its eighth annual "Which MBA" ranking of full-time MBA programs in the world based on its initial selection of 130 leading business schools, which included the Asian Institute of Management (AIM).

AIM's inclusion in this year's initial list highlights the institute's standing in the global business education field.

There are 2,734 institutions all over the world awarding business and management master's degrees, with 686 in Asia-Pacific.

AIM is one of only 13 from the region that made it to The Economist initial list.

While narrowly missing the Top 100 in its first time to join the ranking, AIM officials are pleased with the institute's standings in the survey. "AIM's position in the ranking indicates the institute's stature as a premier graduate school of business and management in Asia," said AIM president Edberto de Jesus.

MANG INASAL ALL SET FOR 100 NEW STORES THIS 2010

As part of the company goals for 2010, MANG INASAL is all set to open 100 new stores this year. Food lovers everywhere embraces MANG INASAL's upcoming store openings as it gets closer to their areas. MANG INASAL plans to put up branches strategically on every part of the Philippines as it gears up for 500 stores target by 2012.

Currently, there are 211 branches nationwide and now with over 6,000 employees system wide, MANG INASAL is doing its share in alleviating the unemployment burden of the country. The presence of every MANG INASAL in a certain area provides not only employment but also opportunities to community members.

Mang Inasal diners enjoy the Chicken Inasal accompanied by UNLIMITED RICE! Suit meals for budget conscious customers are also available for 49pesos only. For more info, please visit www.manginasal.com

CARLOSIAN host Tonda wore sarong the participants of the feeding program event organized by Tandem Properties Inc. in cooperation with the Manila City Hall. Taking part in the program were officials from the Manila City Hall and Tandem Properties Inc.

Aussie firm gives new life to Expo Pilipino

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Lifestyle

CLARK FREEPORT—AUSTRALIAN FIRM has started renovating the Expo Pilipino here as an education center for foreign students.

This ends a decade of being idle since former President Joseph Estrada ordered it closed in 1999 over alleged irregularities in its construction.

Benigno Rimbert, president of the Clark Development Corp., said the Australian company has signed a lease for more than 45 hectares inside the 60-hectare park.

Built by the government at a cost of P3 billion, it was meant to showcase the centennial of Philippine independence in 1998.

Students did not name the company or cited the amount of its investment due to a non-disclosure agreement in the contract.

He said the Nayong Pilipino, which has been using 13 hectares in the park since September 2007, will not be displaced by the new project.

The lease covers the Expo Pilipino amphitheater and gives complimentary use to the CDC or four site forms a year.

"We have saved the government a tremendous expense," Rimbert told the business, referring to the P13-million annual expense for security and maintenance.

The CDC is the real-estate manager of the 4,400-hectare Clark Freeport.

The fresh start given by the Australian investor also helped stop the deterioration of the Expo Pilipino, he said.

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Cashing in on her own comfort food

From page B2-1

programming course in 1993.

She found part-time work as an Italian restaurant.

Bendañan loves cooking and is also inclined in business. When she returned in 1996, she started buying and selling assorted items from Hong Kong.

As a sideline, Bendañan started cooking pasta and salads at home which she delivered to customers, mostly friends.

The buy-and-sell business did not prosper so Bendañan put up a small stall in the public market and started selling take-out food.

Customers started patronizing her food stand so much so that, by the afternoon of each day, everything was sold out.

At that time, she started delivering food to nearby hospitals and government offices.

Bendañan decided to work abroad again to save enough to jumpstart her food business.

When she returned in 2000, she put up a coffee shop which still serving the pasta she eventually became known for.

The coffee shop proved to be a failure. In 2003, she turned a small space near the municipal capitol where she put up a small restaurant with 5 to 5 tables and offered food catering services.

Bendañan initially wanted to focus on her catering service. But when her customer spread, customers came to dinner. Most of those early patrons were the same ones who had come to like the food she had served in her earlier ventures.

The restaurant have moved to a bigger place, which can seat 50 persons.

From earning around P4,000 a day when the restaurant opened, sales have tripled and are even higher during Christmas and Valentine's Day.

During last year's Valentine's Day for example, the establishment earned a net income of P18,000. On Christmas day servers cooked 18 kilos of spaghetti and 97 trays of lasagna and baked macaroni for deliveries.

Spaghetti House also delivers food to customers every day and accepts catering for up to 100 people.

Best spaghetti

The restaurant's recipes were all created by Bendañan, using what she learned from working in an Italian restaurant abroad.

Among the restaurant's bestsellers are spaghetti (P95), lasagna and mache salad good for 2 persons (P110).

They also offer sizzling rice meals, pasta combo meals, barbecue and giant combos, and Japanese food such as maki and sushi.

Bendañan wants her restaurant's success to be a testament to espousing the Filipino's cause.

"Many really come here for the spaghetti, even those who work in far places. Some customers even wait just to be able to eat here."

She says she and her servers are also considerate to customers, many of whom have become their friends.

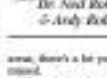
Two government employees who have been eating in the place for have requested not to be named said the spaghetti was delicious and tasty. A young professional said the sauce was lovely and creamy.

As for her spaghetti which many describe to be the best in town, Bendañan says the sauce is loaded with meat, and she uses the most expensive and best ingredients.

"It's to my comfort food, [and] I perfected the recipe over time."

CARLOSIAN'S Spaghetti House turns regular customers from as far as Cambiaria, Quezon and Lipa, Batangas.

What's missing in our annual corporate strategic planning?



Dr. Ned Roberto
& Andy Roberto

Q: SINCE 2007, STEVE JOBS HAS enthusiastic follower of Jack Welch and his General Electric annual strategic planning session. We're reading his books and a book about his annual planning style at G.E., we've infused his planning logic into our annual planning. As CEO in this medium size regional distributorship company, I've facilitated the planning process myself, a la Jack Welch.

In the first year what we "Welch-ized" the annual strategic plan, we missed our targeted numbers. Our strategic plan's tactics focus is to Welch different: (1) how to beat competition in terms of last year's performances, and (2) how to beat competition. We made adjustments for 2008 based on our critical review of 2007 but once more, we fell below targets. And so with last year, 2009.

As what's missing in our annual corporate strategic planning? Welch never missed his numbers.—Frustrated Strategic Planner

A: Why you keep missing your targets even though you're on a Welch planning track? Some major cause from what you're missing within the planning system and what's outside of it. We're sure you realize that, but would like to validate it.

What you're missing within is executable and we've covered this in detail in that December column (Help! We've Been Hijacking Our Targets, Dec. 4, 2009) of ours that you cited. Until our blog at Marketingrx.org). Two items that we probably worth some more study are: (1) Each year, how did you do in terms of "people planning and management?" and (2) Each year, how did you do with respect to "operations planning and management?" Even in just these two areas, there's a lot you may have missed.

What you may have missed on one side of the Welch process is just as many, if not a lot more. But we'd like to talk about what you may have missed you did in implementing Welch. You said that you've "infused" into your annual planning Welch's "planning logic." A focus on the planning logic is naturally good.

But paying too much attention to logic has its drawbacks.

Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning

This was what Henry Mintzberg, the iconic totally renowned management critic, wrote about in his 1994 seminal book, The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning. His book gained widespread acceptance, both in the academe and among practitioners.

Mintzberg found in his researching and research that when a strategic plan contains only or mostly with logic, it often fails to inspire commitment from people to the organization, especially those implementing the plan. What the plan needs in addition to logic is a "soul."

We have found that it makes for synergy when you integrate Mintzberg's ideas into Welch's two concerns about the people side and the operations side of strategic planning. It is in these two elements of plan implementation where that "soul" is to be found and can be activated.

> Paying too much attention to logic has its drawbacks

Now are managers to activate the people implementing the plan? Planning requires "calendaring" managers who give the plan its logic. That's managing from the left hemisphere of the brain. Implementing the plan requires "connecting" managers who give the plan "energy" for activating. That's managing from the brain's right hemisphere.

Are we talking about the same managers. We're talking about you as a manager managing hemispheric sides of the brain.

I have two terms—the left and the right...

That's where the strategic execution sequencing does take place from those who implement as if there are only left brain managers and only right brain ones. Patrick Magesty of Trias Intellectual spaces business courses at TI to this policy. "Those who implement the plan must make the plan," Each manager must be both a left brain manager when planning and a right brain manager when executing.

When you said that you've infused Welch's planning logic into your strategic planning, we take it that like most marketers, you and your managers are mostly left brain managers and so need to train right brain managing skill.

There are many sources of training for this skill. Go and enroll in management schools offering courses promising to get your competencies to include such a skill. Or if your company could afford it, get yourself mentored by right brain management trainers like Franklin Ong and Ian Bautista Bergillano who are licensed John Maxwell Leadership Training trainers.

Send your questions concerning Sales/ Marketing to us at deNedMarketing@gmail.com or MarketingRx@MyDSL.net. Get business planning and other business tool articles written from Francis Kong by texting BIZ to 4626 (for Smart) or 211 FRANCIS to 2919 (for Globe) to subscribe. 02/567-6801.

BUSINESS Friday

Multiply turns site into a virtual marketplace

By Paolo S. Montecillo

Multiply makes it easy for users to buy and sell goods

TECH FILIPINOS TO FIND NEW ways to use social networking sites.

Aside from keeping in touch with old friends, sharing photos and videos and random thoughts through blogs, networking sites have become an effective venue to build a business.

One site in particular—www.multiply.com—has allowed thousands in the country to make money.

To think that today, Multiply for business ventured the site's original terms of service, which users have to agree to before signing up.

As such, Multiply has never done anything to support businesses that operate through the site.

Until now.

In a recent briefing, the Florida-based site launched the new Multiply Marketplace.

This service is a listing of businesses on Multiply, which can be accessed by the site's more than 10 million users in the country.

Jerard Cheris, Multiply Inc. vice-president for business development, launched the service specifically for the Philippines, one of the site's biggest markets.

He noted that one in every three of the site's 13 million users comes from the Philippines.

So far, about 15,000 of these users have identified themselves as businesses that sell a variety of products, ranging from food and gadgets to sports gear.

But the number of "sellers" on the site, he said, could be easily double this amount.

Herds explained that Multiply has become a popular way of doing business in the Philippines due to the ease of use.

He said people can easily upload photos and write descriptions of the products they want to sell on their Multiply accounts.

This content can then be accessed by anyone, even non-Multiply users, depending on the account's privacy settings.

Herds said that eleven per cent of all new sellers on the site, but some users have started to offer professional services like wedding planning and professional photography.

Herds told Manila-based reporters in a recent briefing that because these entrepreneurs already use the site for business, the company decided to take a more proactive approach and encourage more people to use Multiply to promote their businesses.

"So many people have made their Multiply businesses their livelihood. The thought that we could shut their stores down at any moment was very disconcerting for a lot of people," Herds said.

Herds said the site's founders are still perplexed at how Filipinos use the site for business.

"It got on a point where we couldn't ignore it anymore," Herds said.

With Multiply's new Marketplace service, users can easily search for Multiply sellers, which are categorized according to the products they sell or services they offer.

Sellers who wish to be included in the Marketplace listing simply have to register their accounts and specify the products that they sell.

Inclusion in the marketplace, at http://multiply.com/marketplace, is free, although sellers with Premium accounts, which can be topped for P799 annually, will appear in the top of the listings.

The Marketplace service is limited to the listing for now, but Herds said the company was looking for more ways to encourage e-commerce through the site.

"By formally supporting and identifying merchants, we will increase the effectiveness of Multiply as a marketing platform as well as improve the user experience for all users," he added.

Cashing in on her own comfort food

Text and Photos
By Clarice Colting-Polumbarit
Inquirer Southern Luzon

SAN PABLO CITY—A SMALL, TWO-FLOOR restaurant here has captured the hearts and stomachs of people.

Carlene's Spaghetti House, or simply Spaghetti House, cooks and serves 8 to 15 kilos of spaghetti a day, its best-selling dish apart from sarbos and fried chicken.

Owner Jennifer Bandalan, 33, says the establishment has tickled the palates of senators, local government officials and even customers of other food stores as far as Quezon and Batangas.

They all keep coming back for a taste of Bandalan's own comfort food—spaghetti.

Love of cooking

Bandalan started almost two years after she completed a two-year computer

CARLENE'S Spaghetti House in San Pablo City, owned by Jennifer Bandalan (above), offers what many customers claim is the best spaghetti in town.

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How Hollywood is going nude

The 67th Golden Globes red carpet shows off the color of 2010

By Cherlie V. Moral

BLAME IT ON THE BARE. BUT EVERY pale-colored dress that went out on the red carpet at the 67th Golden Globes will probably never be enthroned to their original drapery on Nicolas Cage Emily couture.

Met a few stressed to have abandoned the smallest damsel as a great majority opted for nude or blush-colored frocks. Some eventually drenched, for outnumbering the monotony of violet Claudia Bullock in Bottega Veneta, for one), gowns: Rhianna Griffith in Dior, the very pregnant Amy Adams in Carolina Herrera and the divine 88-year-old Japanese Princess in Herve L. Leroux), and even the jewel tones (Sandra Bullock in Armani Prive, Olivia Wilde in Gucci and two more middle-aged beauties, Glenn Close in Oscar de la Renta and Helen Mirren in Giorgio Armani).

But nothing, not even a little decompression, could push a dampen on the light-colored Leonine on Sunday evening—their freaky paleness straight out of the pages of It's January issue.

There was the fashion rebel Chloe Sevigny in a ruffled Valentino that could have looked comical on a lesser woman. Maggie Gyllenhaal was just as fetching, if safe, in a peach RM by Roland Mouret.

Both 36-yo Rose Byrne and Anjelica Gorman came to speckled Atelier dresses, while Heidi Klum and George Clooney's date Elisabetta Canalis were both in Roberto Cavalli.

Golden Globbers, in Sena Rhianna Feet's arm, arrived in Alberta Ferretti, while Kate Hudson was in a monogram like Matchbox chest. Goddess Global associates Jessica Kendrick ("Up in the Air") and Gladiolus Brook (six more unending ruffles, the former in Marchesa, the "Mad Men" vamp in Christian Siriano).

The very pale Nicole Kidman came in an equally pale, draped Nina Ricci, while Emily Blunt went in a pale pink Grace-like

NOW | C2

Sarah Jessica Parker named Halston chief creative officer

THERE'S NEWS ABOUT SARAH JESSICA Parker that's even bigger than the fifty extras of her new flick "Sex and the City" part two. She's just been named president and chief creative officer of Halston.

The American brand is being revived with multi-high-profile investors as Hollywood producers Harvey Weinstein and Jimmy Choos' Tamara Mellon. As part of the deal, the actress will also have a seat at the Halston board. Parker's New Daily reports...

While Halston insiders dismissed as several details of Parker's contract with the company, they have expressed confidence in the actress' potential to boost sales for the brand.

PARKER

Parker enjoys fashion icon status, with a successful fashion line under her belt (she most produced Bitten for the non-debutant retailer Steve and Barry's), and an equally successful fragrance line for Coty Prestige.

"There is a huge amount I don't know and I am very candid about that, and I am excited to learn," Parker tells WWD. "There are going to be things that come up that I am equipped to deal with and answer and respond to, and there are things that I will be happily convinced on by [Halston CEO] Bonnie [Tokkin]. I have no allergy to learning."

How Hollywood is going nude

SANDRA Bullock, star of "The Blind Side," arrives at the 15th annual Critics' Choice Movie Awards clutching a Celestina minaudiere. Celestina is a bag and accessories line designed by Filipina model-entrepreneur Tina Maricris Ocampo.

Footnotes #1

Dolce & Gabbana.

Some of our personal picks, however, were the Lauren-clad January Jones ("Mad Men"), who also sported a matching black headband, and "Damages" star Rose Byrne; ditch top to toe in purple; and Julia Roberts who, at IWSG orchestrally reports, overdosed the designer bonanza and opted for the sheer, late-'70s Yves Saint Laurent she purchased in a Nel Jos boutique in Manhattan.

It's only January and still freezing in many corners of the globe. But take over our B'coiners for now to go nude.

CHLOE Sevigny (left) in Valentino, and Nicole Kidman (right) in Miss Sixty

DREW Barrymore (right) in Atelier Versace and Kate Hudson (left) in Matthew

RHODIE Ophelia ... JENNA Fischer ... CELESTE Parchhart ... HEIDI Klum ... EVA La Rue ... EMILY Blunt ... ELISABETTA Canalis ... FERGIE ... JAMIE Pressly ...

New high-end complex watch collections

BULGARI STRENGTHENS ITS PRESence in high-end and complicated watchmaking through the Gérald Genta and Daniel Roth collections.

Francesco Trapani, CEO of the Bulgari Group, made the announcement Jan. 15 in Rome.

"Bulgari is entering a new era," said Trapani. "Ten years ago, I expressed in an interview the desire to develop our know-how in the watch complication craftsmanship sector.

"Subsequently Bulgari built, in different stages, a network of manufacturing facilities for the production of top of the range cases, dials and watch bracelets.

"In parallel, we progressively expanded all our knowledge of the mechanical base movements as well as our expertise in the field of the complicated movements.

"Today I am subtly say our mission is accomplished."

Trapani said the new ventures would "merge the cutting-edge skills of our Gérald Genta and Daniel Roth Manufacture in Le Locle with the prestigious image of Bulgari."

While preserving their technical and aesthetic qualities, the Daniel Roth and Gérald Genta timepieces will be fully integrated into the collection of the Bulgari brand, he added.

"The merger of these skills offers Bulgari new perspectives and dimensions," Trapani said.

"It allows us to advance in the sector of watch excellence through extensive collections at every high level."

The newest creations will be exhibited at Salon Mondial de l'Horlogerie in Basel mid-February.

Bulgari is one of the global players on the luxury market. In 2008, it posted a turnover of about 1 billion euros.

Bulgari relies on a sales network in the most exclusive shopping areas in the world and on selected distributors. It has 271 stores around the world, 193 directly owned.

Bulgari has a product portfolio that ranges from jewels and watches to accessories and perfumes.

The group is controlled by the Bulgari family, holding about 52 percent of the share capital. The remaining 48 percent is floating on the Milan Stock Exchange.

Rock-star-cool bags

FEMININE AND CHIC WITH A DASHing injection of rock-star cool, Kipling's new collection, Rock Heavens, is perfect for those lazy days and busy nights.

Inspired by the latest "this revival—drink Kate Moss and a dark slick of smudged eyeliner—Rock Heavens embodies the new wave of grunge glam out.

Clean styling with hard-edge rings, zips and pockets add star while the unique coated fabric gives the collection a cool, contemporary feel to glam up any grunge goddess' wardrobe.

Gaelle in golden yellow is a standout while Akane in pitch black is a cool clubbing companion.

Rings to mosaic gray or Leslie in dusk are for those reckless weekends.

Kipling's new collection is now available at Mall of Asia, SM Megamall, SM City North EDSA-The Block, Robinson's Place Manila, SM City Sta Mesa, SM City Cebu, Iloilo and Davao.

Fashion explosion—on the tennis court

Nadal, Sharapova (before her loss) and co. strut their stuff at the Australian Open

ELABORATE dress and Tiffany earrings hid as sure Maria Sharapova from that record deluge at the Aussie Open.

By Paula Malai Ali
Contributor

TENNIS SEASON IS ON, AND TO HAIL who waited with bated breath for the game's top names to come out of hibernation, welcome to the Australian Open, the first grand slam of the year.

Like most fans, I'm looking forward to the fashion parade on the courts in Melbourne.

The Australian Open is perfect for making a fashion statement, being the most casual and fun leg of all grand slams with its party-like atmosphere and irreverent crowds.

Compared to the extravagant and dramatic outfits of a few seasons back, it appears the trend this year is back to more conservative, functional lines.

Trend-setting Rafael Nadal, who made famous the gypsy bandana, right sleeveless shirt and jersey pants, seems to be heading toward a more traditional and mature, looking style with collared shirts and shorter tennis shorts last season.

However, the world's No. 2 player is still partial to bright colors like his neon pink shirt that lit up last year's Roland Garros. This year, he's going with an emphatic, orange tangerine top and plaid shorts.

Sleeveless look

If it's blurbs you want, the world's third-ranked player Juan Martin del Potro seems to be following in Nadal's foot steps, keeping the distressed look he debuted when he won last year's US Open. He could be pick out a color other than black? It's to find out.

Looking gorgeous in green is Spain's former Wimbledon finalist, Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario, who made Gimenez the gypsy bandana, right sleeveless shirt and jersey pants, seems to be heading toward a more traditional and mature, ...

FIGURE-HUGGING outfit on her favorite Alex Bogomolec ...

RAFAEL Nadal in a snug tangerine top and Roger Federer in a cherry he wore last year ...

he's wearing? Will his sartorial-appeal bodes, he could look fabulous even in a plastic bag.

Pun favorite Ana Ivanovic is expected to wear a figure-hugging yellow dress that would allow her athletic frame to stand out on the blue courts at the Aussie Open.

Elaborate outfit

And, of course, the fashion queen of the courts, Maria Sharapova, who recently inked a $70-million-right-year deal with Nike, has just launched her very-statement-outspoken layered outfit. She went with Tiffany & Co. a Paloma Picasso earrings.

At least she'll be going home with something even if she crashed out on the first round.

What about No. 1 Roger Federer? Anything is on super-hot but this year—he's doing the same colors he wore in 2009. But why should Mr. Smooth fix something that's already elegant and unassailable all at once?

Andy's Agassi once said that Federer comes onto the court looking like Cary Grant—he's that smooth.

However, this penny-saver-for-last-thing-you-forget's mind to his outfit. He feels would rather be on making amends for last year's defeat to Nadal in the final.

Catch Paula Malai Ali on Star Sports' coverage of the Australian Open and www.agassi.com for her exclusive player interviews.

Italian-Japanese brand now in Manila

PINK Hershey drawstring

TOKIDOKI, THE JAPANESE LIFESTYLE-inspired brand created by Italian artist Simone Legno, comes to Manila at the SM Department Store's Fashion Forum section at its Makati and Megamall stores.

Tokidoki, which means "somewhat" in Japanese, depicts the artwork of Simone Legno, who has created a variety of characters to its clothing and accessories lines.

Although Italian, Simone Legno chose "a Japanese word" because I love Japan. I love everything there, from the ultra modern happy face of Shibuya to the serene magic silence of Kyoto."

Likewise, "I chose it to mean 'somewhere' because everyone seeks for moments that change one's destiny. By a simple chance meeting, Tokidoki is the hope, the hidden energy everyone has inside that gives us the strength to face a new day and dream something positive and something magical will happen to us."

With its young and hit designs, and cute playful characters, Tokidoki has become an urban fashion hit. Hip-that magical fashion moment with colorful Tokidoki tees and lightweight zipped hoodies with whimsical prints. These are available at the Fashion Forum section of SM Department Stores at the third floor of SM Makati and the second floor of SM Megamall.

T-SHIRT Bloom Floral hoodie

HERSHEY hoodie/tee

ICLOOKWISE from left: Fleece Mallows Watch (circle), Mini Suitcase tee, Tokidoki evasion All Stars basic hoodie in periwinkle

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LIFESTYLE Fashion & Beauty

Palawan fashion boosts resort wear

By Lory Lorino
Contributor

TWO NEW SEASONS HAVE been created by the international fashion industry. Resort Wear and Pre-Fall collections, to stimulate further the fashion retail market through transitional clothes after the seasonal sales.

Of all the new six collections Filipinos are exposed to yearly, resort wear is the most adaptable and comfortable for our year-round breathing rain or shine.

Resort wear are sporty pieces meant to be worn near the sea in a laid back manner. Tops are sleeved or sleeveless, dresses are brief, colors are sun and weather casual. Colors are casual, exotic or spring neutrals (colors this season are black, white, olive drab and khaki). Shoes are casual, accessories are functional.

But since we go in and out of air-conditioned environs and step back into the hot sun, it would help if we have lots of opaque wraps, ponchos and jackets we could easily wear off and on our tank tops, camisoles and halter tops.

Let me illustrate my point with our scoop spread today.

At the look launch of "Palawan: Land of Blessing," greeted by the handsome and simpatico Jose Joel Reyes, all the ladies bound for Lagen, El Nido, Coron, Culion, San Fabian or Mangsinsigan were ruminations of the resort fashion. They looked sexy yet cool.

Formal yet, but really casual. Those was the mind-boggle (BE) set-up with the ladies escalatively from the bosom of Palawan, not quite just, not quite prim, but it is the wrap-to-town this year.

It was Reyes' daughter, Jackie and Cristelle Sessano, who were the best color clashers in their attire. Very resort-ish.

Marina Benipayo was in sunkissed sleeveless tee and skinny jeans. Very resort-ish too. Even Lucio Cruz chose to slip a long Tagapina scarf over his ubiquitous off-the-shoulder top... the last resort.

PURPLE wrap on Gina Magpayo

IT'S A WRAP. Tepaina, a cross between jusi and pina and an exclusive weave from Palawan, on Janine Espinosa and Melissa Reyes

CABBAGE ROSES AND BLACK lace on first daughter of Palawan Jackie Reyes

AZTEC EMBROIDERY. Yellow resort shift on Cristelle Messano

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Wearing this season's gunmetal shadow

A BOLD, METALLIC GRAY shade called gunmetal is a softer, more updated version of the standard smoky eye.

No longer limited to evening makeup, gunmetal is an effortless shadow for day as it can be worn in a hint of silvery gray shadow on the lids. Transforming The look From day to night is just as easy—just add layers to brighten the eyes (assuming perfect) for evening.

While black shadow is a classic choice for creating smoky eyes, it tends to look too dark and pallid when applied too heavily. Gunmetal has the sophistication of black shadow with an off-color, glam appeal.

It is easy to be drawn to metallics, especially with the season's assortment of colors. "Also hues in bronze or antique gold, copper and a variety of greys look stunning," says Ima Dominic makeup artist Omee Ermita.

When choosing eyeshadow, Ermita suggests to play with textures. "metallic wins over matte shadows, but you can mix them as well, using matte helps us the focus more instead of a shimmery beige shadow."

To achieve the look, Ermita prepped the skin by cleansing, toning and moisturizing it. He then selected the foundation shade closest to the model's skintone, and applied it evenly on her face. Concealer was applied to problem areas and the makeup was set with loose powder.

The eyebrows were then groomed and a shimmery beige shadow was applied on the brow bone. A sweep of gunmetal grey shadow was blended all over the lids and a portable white shadow was dotted on the eyes' inner corners. Ermita then lined the rims of the eyes with black eyeliner and added a thin line of liquid liner on the top lash-line to give the eyes more definition.

The model's lashes were curled and swiped with two coats of black mascara. Ermita then lifted the look by working in peach blush on the apples of the cheeks and applying a coat of pinkish- beige lipstick on the lips.

A softer, more updated version of the smoky eye

Kelly Min, Brides of the Week

Other tips

When applying gunmetal eyeshadow, Ermita recommends spreading the shadow from the center of the lid and blending outward toward the edges.

"This gives a nice gradation of color," Ermita said. "Or, you can start with a light swipe of color, then layer or build it up to get a (more) dramatic look."

To avoid going overboard on metallic makeup, "keep the skin matte, the cheeks a little sexy and the lips semi-matte," suggests Ermita. Again, playing with textures is ideal when wearing makeup.

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BRAZILIAN models Pedro Dirkon and Nanda Hudson with Ben Zobel Jr. and Benjamin Ting

RUSHMAN Chey Cabangon and New York chef Lorna Rayson

BEAUTIFUL COUPLE Cristeta and Bernie Tantoco

PRINCE of abs rocks Ben Tantoco and glam charity organizer Vicky Zobel

Ireland's president Sandy Prieto Romualdez and man of the hour Antón San Diego

Tatler ed celebrates birthday at Establishment

INTERNATIONALLY acclaimed bag and couture jewelry designer Bea Valdez with husband Archie Rodriguez

MARIANNE and her husband, Conrado 'Tonu's' Tait Po

BOSSIE Magazine publisher and awesome charity fundraiser Maricris Zobel with London-based sister-in-law Dodie Zobel

LILLIE Zobel and Claudia Tantoco

JUDE and Sharon Carvalho

MULTIFACETED PERSONALITY, Philippine Tatler editor in chief, and source of highly acclaimed 'The Establishment' Antón San Diego celebrated his birthday last month at the ultra chic restaurant, Crystal Room at The Establishment, naturally.

Hovering in their hot, habitable form were the family and close pals. Despite everyone's hectic schedules during the Christmas season, his special revelers made time to greet our Prince for a Day.

Making it even more special for him was when renowned acclaimed Peluseros of Italian Specialties, **Margarita Forés** from culture of Establishment told him that she requested and well-read magazine, Travel and Leisure, named 'The Establishment as 'one of the best places in the Philippines for 2009.'"

Antón then excitedly whispered to me: "Despite numerous setbacks last year, this makes it all worth it!"

Other guests included Dr. **Randy** and **Irene Francisco**, Dennis and Tessa Valdes, **Sander** and **Mona Tantoco**, Rhea and Tina Ocampo, **Karen Davila**, **Georgina Wilson**, Ibarla Gutierrez and popular Tagalog's Hot Couple, Mayor Jerry Trillanes and Anne Thiga, dabbings.

I asked the celebrant what his wish was for 2010. He result, he answered, "more like others. I guess, as learn from the past and move on; be better in what I do...be it at the Tatler, Kanak Intimate or other aspects of life."

By this time we moved on to other happenings, as we had, we all definitely had our fill of flowing champagne and loads of tea. Be for, excellently prepared hors d'oeuvres and light dinner menu, superbly done by chef par excellence Geoffrey Lallarena, to-boot, dabbings.

Truly an awesome way to spend a night with one of my truest of pals, Antón San Diego.

Full moon party

Vivienne Josephine del Gallego, civic-minded fundraiser extraordinaire and one of our town's jet de vivre hostesses, has always had a love affair with the moon. Her mother, Mariacarmen Siquian, an accomplished pianist, always played "Clair de Lune," Francisco del Gallego's favorite classical piano, palongges.

While visiting Antarctica, she learned the local custom to ensure there will be no rain on an important event. So she asked friends "in dances each time they take a shower days prior to the event," hospitality del Gallego-Soriano mused, and it worked, dabbings, with stars glittering across the moonlit sky last December, dabbings.

This luscious conceptualized to alluring extravaganza for the multi-hued table—nine 20-inch diameter moon tes sculptures with red rose petals in them, representing her second full moon party at Bartwell's lower garden. The buffet prepared by gourmet chef Annie Ancheta, no less, was a feast for all senses, dabbings.

Standing under the magical full moon were my two favorite dramas for my debutant here, Dr. Vicki Belo and Dr. Hot Stear, Dr. Marlene Cruz. Power Point VP manager **Bladee Pineda** with hubby Paulo, MDS CEO Mr. for business development. About proprietor Eric Uriz, Le's **Kristine del Gallego**, world-renowned Belgian photographer **Frank Horikawa**, IM CEO Stephen Tiu and wife **Jennifer with husband, Michael**, president of Jordan Group, Inc., banker couple, HSBC's **Ramon** Bautista and BSP Director **Patrick Dumlao**; Lala's, Leslie Hinchey and Chico Salgado.

Also there were other super close pals of our town lady palongges: Cinderella's swan of salvation Shannon Hunter, Ballet Philippines Ma-an Hawthorne; and Josephine's cousin, Cebu businessman Mike del Gallego, who flew in, and real estate developer Jude del Gallego-Carvalho with wife Savannah, from Vancouver, dabbings.

The hostess also included Josephine's Bonifacio neighbors, among them were Dr. Paul Yao, Dr. Rosgie Gilbert Tan, Ambassadors Phillip Mahilangan and Lani Mercado, CEO's Rizza Lauzi, yeah-look realtor Beth Bermudez, eye-catching beauty Susan Reyes, and these co-impresses Ulrich Dobringer, plus the Russell family.

As in her past full moon party, Josephine made a toast to the moon. **Mary Russell** joined in from Hong Kong, leading the toast. The toast cards read "Drink wine. This is life eternal. This is all that youth and the young at heart can give to you. It is the season for wine, roses and drunken blonde. Be happy for this moment. This moment is your life."

And we all did happily—dining, dancing, drinking under the breathtaking gorgeous full moon.

I wonder what our moon lady will do this month? Full of the blue moon. The first wine on Jan. 1 and the second on Jan. 30—another full moon bash, til-holes!

Esther's Note: Mariacar Arcache's solstice will also come out on Sunday, Jan. 24.)

THE CELEBRANTS with his three-level, super fun International School classmates: Antón S.D. (second from right), Pepe Fernandez, Mela Cuaso, Laurie Jimenez Wherfel and Kishat Zobel

BABIL and Kathy Ong with Gloria and Mikee Cojuangco

MISSY and Jim Ayala

TESSIE Gru Prieto and Doris Ho

MULTIFACETED businessman Patxi Bilbao and his wife, Steps Downs Ibrahim's Sofia Zobel

ALEX Van Hagen, Pepper Tadiwalwa and makeup artist Pamela Rosa

ITALIAN parents socialites Sandy Orbeta and Pita Marrazzi

MANOL Encinas and Mirela Lin

HIGHLIGHT lady and business par excellence Josephine del Gallego

MARVIN Vazquez, Jamal I Krisna, Mari and Sorts Russell, Vicky Zobel and Jill Batelegar

MATTEI Erin Bergen, Linda Tirnauer and Lidi Perez-Nubla (standing) Bennett and Amanda Kearns, Josephine del Gallego and Victoria Prysner

ARCHITECT Conrad Dugies, Chico Laurel, Jury Velasquez and Evelyn Parlan

ARCHITECT Ed Calma, Power Plant VP; manager Helen Pineda and her husband Paolo

Mommy-approved baby-care products

NO, IT'S NOT A welcome to milk you of your money. There's a reason behind the need for special baby-care products.

The answer is pretty simple. Babies have new hair and sensitive skin, not to mention a lot of diaper changes. Infection with sensitive skin can easily lead to something worse.

A slight irritation or tingle to us can be a world of pain for the baby. As such, you can't just use any regular shampoo, soap, or conditioner on your child.

But first to find bath and body products designed specifically with them in mind. Luckily, I asked "nabe" for help. Pano ako nawalan ng wonderful baby care products to choose from and can on their baby's skin. Here are four moms with their top picks.

Note: E.U.E means, my son was only using Lactacyd as his shampoo and soap. Above he turned 1.5 years old...I switched him to Johnson's baby shampoo and Johnson's baby soap because these products don't have his eyes especially when he's playing in the shower."—Aimee and Skye Chionglian, nonoy-cainur

Isabel Rosos, Bichlogie Plus

"You can't go wrong with Johnson's products when it comes to caring for your children. I use the pink baby shampoo and conditioner for my 4-year-old and the yellow baby shampoo for my 10-year-old. I also use Johnson's cream and their honey baby lotion on them and on myself as well. All their products are not harsh yet clean and moisturize well... Plus, they smell really good."—Cleotopia Schultes-Del Rosario, Wedding Planner associate editor, Metro Weddings

YEHNEE and Skye Chionglian

EARTH'S Best 2-in-1 Shampoo and Body Wash and Jason Quik Bugging Me lotion repellent

TINA Paner Gonzalez with baby

"Yes Zen, I use Earth's Best 2-in-1 Shampoo & Body Wash. It gently cleanses her skin and hair. It's lightly scented with lavender oil to calm her during bath time. To repel the bugs, I use Jason Quik Bugging Me spray. It's made of natural bug banishing ingredients. When I take her or he heads, I use Avalon Baby Natural Mineral Sunscreen SPF 18. All products are from Healthy Options."—Tina Paner Gonzalez, entrepreneur

Tips

- Avoid using baby powders. Infants can inhale the small, powder particles and this may cause respiratory problems.
- One of the most important areas to protect is the delicate skin of babies that comes in contact with wet or soiled diapers. Use baby diapering products with natural ingredients. Pick skincare do not overmoisturize it as it may encourage the growth of certain yeasts and can cause diaper rash.
- Add fragrance-free soaps are not necessary for home use. Children do not have to be protected from all bacteria, in fact, some bacteria are beneficial. Scientists are concerned that anti-bacterial soaps kill beneficial bacteria and also contribute to the creation of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.
- Lessen the use of lotions and oils. Rubbing lotion more than necessary or using harsh soaps strip their skin's natural oils.

EARTH Avalon Organics for diaper rash

Try Avalon Organics Soothing Zinc Diaper Balm, which relieves the rash and helps skin to heal. Available at Healthy Options.

Say goodbye to bad hair days

EVERY WOMAN KNOWS IS WILL succumb to an emotional impulse for a new haircut and style, which may be a disaster. In my case, it was about half a year ago when I decided to oust a famous stylist to cut my unadvisedly long locks just-length short and slightly bowed because I feared I was stuck in a style rut.

But I realized a month and a half later that the new one did not suit me; it was for from wash and wear and still not short to me.

So I went to another salon and opted for a new trim and full bangs. I know I had made a severe urban my husband and family looked on horrified and remained silent when asked what they thought.

Kimmy Sedaya

The said week-length hair plus bangs made my square jaw line look enormous and the bangs that covered my forehead gave me hamster cheeks.

That was four months ago and I did not have anyone cut my hair again till last week.

There was no room for experimenting and I decided to go to that one person who always made bad hair days vanish for me—Lorex Philippe Roc.

At Glo-point, my three-passenger taxi have to reached my shoulder and I told him I wanted the same length with a style that flattered my face shape.

He opted to give me cinnamon highlights of mahogany, auburn and red gold, but not before dyeing my base color lavender brown. My hair which was very straggly near the ends were infused with several Kerastase treatments such as Bain Cornicet and Aqua Divain to nourish and strengthen the strands from within as well as leave a protective coating to boost the shine and softness.

Then came the haircut. Lorex has a method to make cowlicks behave and rebellious waves wash for you so that your hair always falls the same way you want it.

It curves bald spots and huge areas of your face so you look slimmer or fuller where it counts. My hair can be tied in a ponytail, but even when loose nothing falls on my face as the layers curve back in face framing waves without any styling products. The new hair coloring is customized to flatter the client's skintone even without makeup so there will be less effort to get ready for a day or night out.

Facts

1. Haircut with Lorex does not come cheap. For men, P1,900; for women, P1,500-P1,600 depending on hair length.

2. My hair is very fine, flat and on the thin side and tends to flyaway easily. This seems to be Lorex' forte as the stylists I have taken with this hair type has been very happy and willing to recreate. Those with very thick hair, with thick strands, or very curly are not as enthusiastic.

One of maybe 10 people I have brought in with these varying hair types around six or seven are happy but the others are unsolved of and have decided to keep looking.

Must try

Those bothered by persistent muscle pains, especially on the calves, shoulders and back, should try the salon's heat-bag Full Body Massage (P900). Masseuses Odessa and Rachel are both trained in Swedish, shiatsu and Thai Massage.

Lorex Philippe Roc is at One-McKinley Place (4th floor, opp. 28th St. fire) Bonifacio, Taguig City. Call 8562388.

The new look of Beauty by SM in Makati

Beauty by SM launches today its newly redesigned and more exciting store in the Ground Floor of the SM Department Store in Makati.

The SM Department Store in Makati first opened in 1972, was rebuilt and reopened in 2002. The beauty mall has just recently renovated and relaunched its beauty (or SM!)

The Beauty mall, named Beauty by SM, at 1,000 sq. metres is the largest amongst the 38 currently operating throughout the Philippines, and the largest beauty hall in the Philippines and probably amongst the biggest in the world. It maintains a beautiful footprint in 2010.

The new store's contemporary interior and redesigned ambiance is highly sensational! Also with newest architectural design, Priest Design and the SM Group, it exudes a relaxed and entertainment ambiance, making it conducive to shopping.

The store also turns normal aisles create an exciting shopping turns feature walk-in the back part of the store. Large graphics identify the product categories, making it easier for the shopper to navigate through the display counters and islands. The lighting, which shines through the clean, limitless and interesting dimensions is relaxed.

With the opening of our new flagship store in Makati, we are all the more dedicated in bringing beauty to our customers through an exciting new shopping experience," says Vicente Encarnacion, Director for Marketing. "Our loyalty we have created a whole new look and reorganized a more spacious distinct multi-beauty section."

The new store layout and design was meticulously laid out in the design is also the philosophy in the new beauty display. New product concept-wide, neat reference product for customers. Very organized and properly labeled, provides ample time during Clean signage public restrooms in the front to the products with more ease.

For customer convenience, Beauty by SM is not as a walk-in and store, with its exciting mix of cosmetic brands in the market. Customers can go here for personal care (bath and body), facial care, skin care, cosmetics, cleansing, hair care and fragrances.

An interesting element is the introduction of the longest Men's Zone ever in the country, which has a complete line of personal care products designed for men's needs.

It's a haven for beauty where one can find the latest beauty products, try out the trending new innovations, and speak to experts they can trust. Beauty by SM also has the widest range of products available in the market, including exclusive products, as well as premium and celebrities (celebrities collaborations with SM's) and we guard all "prestige."

Carrying more than 7500 unique products, customers will find a wonderful mix of favorite names and new products. There are 13 fragrance brands, 30 cosmetic brands, 50 skincare brands, and over 90 exclusive brands, among them are Tru Additive, Clinelle, Cosmedicine, ALC, Arimé, Nina Beauty Credit, and.

New skin care brands like Timewise and Clinelle join Proctor & Gamble, and Olay to make Beauty by SM a haven for skin care. All these fragrances from Watsons Own Label and Escher Mont under a subsidiary of Lynch chocolate for hair, body, and skin care products. Counters are full of the latest innovation from Revlon, Lux, and Cacharel's white fragrances from Calvin Klein, Ralph Lauren, Givenchy, Hugo Boss, and Lacoste and the latest to their lineup.

Shoppers can try the store's latest beauty products in numerous makeover stations, as well as innovative consultations. To help them pick the best products suited for them, beauty consultants are there to give their expert advice.

"We have listened to our customers and addressed their needs with a selection of their beauty objectives. Together with our partners, we will continue to roll out the new format throughout the country chain."

To celebrate the feast of beauty at the all new, all improved beauty section at the SM Department Store in Makati.

The center aisle of the newly renovated beauty section of the SM Department Store in Makati.

Find these fragrances brands like Hugo Boss, Ralph Lauren, Givenchy and Calvin Klein in SM Makati's beauty section.

The Men's Zone at Beauty by SM.

Watsons Pharmacy at Beauty by SM.

With its modern and spacious design, the revamped Beauty by SM offers the best brands in cosmetics, fragrances, wellness, skin care and personal care.

Try the latest beauty products with the various makeover studios in Beauty by SM.

What's In Store

Exciting beauty finds at SM

LIKE WORDS: a complete line of personal care products exclusively available at Beauty by SM and Watsons stores.

WHAT MEN WANT: Nivea For Men head-to-toe grooming products.

Flora by Gucci Exotic Tuberose for the sophisticated fashionista.

THE GOOD STANDARD IN MEN'S FRAGRANCE: Paco Rabanne's 1 Million.

Loreal's True Match liquid foundation is developed to match Asian skin tones and hydrates all day long.

Get celebrity hair care with the 100% vegan haircaring pairs from Jonathan.

CLINELLE SNOWWHITE MASK: Whitening and hydrating mask made with natural extracts.

Ginseng skincare for a vibrant, beautiful complexion.

EXCLUSIVELY AT BEAUTY BY SM: Lulu Lancombe para a modern chic on classic beauty with its cutting-edge products.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emerie S. Velarde

Alikabok: The Musical' tonight

ATENEO DE MANILA UNIVERSITY PRESENTS 'ALIKABOK: The Musical' tonight, till Jan. 24 at Medici Theater, Pasig City. The play, written by Ryan Cayabyab with influences in pantomime, features scenes of students and faculty. Proceeds go to Ateneo College Scholarship Services and Heavenly Education Agenda for the Poor.

SHOW TIME

CHOOSE YOUR Valentine SHOW

REMEMBER? "Crossover" after a show together, talk in their restroom, or the dressing room...

It might be . . . Pops & Martin

EVERY YEAR, Inquirer ENTERTAINMENT helps readers pitch a show for that special day, by asking this concert writer to talk about their gigs ... and romance.

Martin Nievera and Pops Fernandez, "This A Mary Thing," Feb. 14, SM Convention Center, Mall of Asia Complex, Pasay City. Call 625-7399 or 403-8002

Was there a time when you were not doing a Valentine show?

Martin: Yes, when we were still married. The whole night we would just look at each other.

Your most romantic Valentine's Day ever?

Pops: I can't remember, hahaha!

M: "You're not gonna like mine ... It was after a show and ... we had a "moment" in the dressing room ...

P: Sa'n?

M: (Be used to like it seeing seven rooms. She found it very sexy ... Still in our concert clothes ... close the door ... hmm?

P: Oh my God, can you remove that part?

Is there an ideal Valentine's date?

M: For me...it's always with Pops.

P: Okay, write that in bold letters.

(>>)

Beach Boys play for families now

By Pedrole Concepcion

SOME CRITICS BELIEVE THAT THE GREATest album of all time is "Be Bowlin' "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" (1967). Paul McCartney has acknowledged that the album was inspired by one released a year earlier—

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

The Beach Boys' "Pet Sounds." Brian Wilson, considered by Beach Boys insider Brian Wilson a few months after he quit touring with the band, had met with resistance from the other members, who thought the songs were a radical departure from their signature sound.

That sound, based on vocal harmonies in songs that celebrate surfing, cars and girls, continues to drive the current Beach Boys lineup, led by co-founding member and lead vocalist Mike Love.

Love, 68, is still touring and singing about a bygone era which, he notes, is kept alive by a younger generation who "flock to Boy concerts with their grandparents. Though two of Love's cousins (Dennis and Carl Wilson) in the original group have died, and Brian has his occasional woes, rarely there will always be time eagle to hear "California Girls," "Good Vibrations" and other Beach Boys classics.

(>>)

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Beach Boys . . .

from page 41

The bygone interviewed Love on a rainy days before the Beach Boys' Jan. 27 concert at the Araneta Coliseum.

What new thing do have you discovered about your audience?

They're not as rowdy as we. In the audience, it's grandparents, singing along to the same songs.

You sang lead vocals on many Beach Boys classics and co-wrote some of them. Which one's mean a lot you?

"Good Vibrations" was our most successful single from The '60s. It was a collaboration between me and Brian. It is probably Car Guys's most creative and unique hit single and the most successful until "Kokomo" in 1988. That one was a collaboration between myself, John Phillips of The Mamas & the Papas, and Terry Melcher, who was the song's producer.

What's in the best among these songs, for you?

Again, "Good Vibrations," to me, stood "Single of the Century" by Rolling Stone magazine years ago.

BEACH Boys vocalists Mike Love (far left) and Al Jardine (right), with Love's son Christian Love

Brian, Carl and Dennis were said to have a complicated relationship with their father, Murry Wilson. **Have they ever talked about your cousins?**

Uncle Murry was dominating and abusive. I remember him telling Brian that he didn't know what Brian was doing...he was obviously wrong.

What was it like when they found renewed with their fans, after almost losing the songs? Did it's been back for him?

Fans were such our concerts to have a good time. We were sad about leaving without Brian, but our audiences since the mid-'60s have always enjoyed them selves. I believe that as long as the songs are performed well, the audience will be satisfied.

How do you feel singing about surfing, girls and cars at your age?

For those of us who came of age in the '60s, these songs make up the soundtrack of our lives. The music may sound nostalgic, but millions of other discovered on music later.

What kind of music do you listen to these days?

I tune in the radio to the oldies station to listen to a Beach Boys song, or The Beatles or Motown.

What keeps you busy aside from touring?

I own ... travel ing, to experience different cultures and food. Otherwise, I just live a normal life as a father, husband and community member.

It . . .

from page 41

Who's your fantasy date?

P: It has to be Brad Pitt. He's so available in real life and everything "Twilight." I even saw for Edward Cullen.

M: Either would be Elmo Desiderio. I think that would be the most fun. We both love gala. And she's Kuya. There would be no eating, no drinking or swooning. She'd just make fun of people.

From among millions of romantic songs, do you have a favorite?

P: For me, it will always be "It Might Be You." I guess because I'm still figuring out who it might be in my life.

M: I like "Unchained Melody" is the highest point of history to love, we don't sings that one.

Why should we watch your concert?

M: Our kids are in college.

P: They need this.

P: This is the first time we have a concept for our shows. We want to pass the tolerance bid.

COMICRelief

GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

A LIPAK — BY JESS ABRERA

PUGAD BABOY — BY PH. JUNIOR

DICK TRACY

LOVE KNOTS — BY ELIZABETH CHONGCO

JAMES BOND

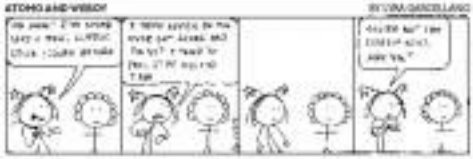
ERVINE COMEDY — BY STEVEN PABAUNAS

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

TULDOK — BY MARA COLL

BEH — BY DANIEL LIMJETON

ATOMIC AND WEEDY — BY DINA GARCELLANO



KUBO MACHINE — BY MARIO ABRERA

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

ARIES (March 21 to April 20). This is an emotional day for you. Remember the Minnie's former days. The zodiac was hospitalized with others. Guard against knee and waistline.

TAURUS (April 21 to May 20). Perhaps because of your unfamiliar or bizarre ways, you need a teacher? It's not your fault. It's just that you're not in your element.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20). You might have a meaningful conversation with a family acquaintance. Watch for the non-verbal cues that could be provocative and highly challenging. Who knows?

CANCER (June 21 to July 22). Some aspect of your private life suddenly will be made public. Don't panic. Whatever occurs might just be a positive influence. Actually, it's inconsequential. Relax.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22). Try to do something different today. Don't be afraid to take risks. Be creative. You are capable of more than others suspect and different backgrounds.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22). Although you're focused on career matters, don't neglect your family. Spend some time with them. Discuss your finances and budding. Do not make any unnecessary decisions. Watch your temper.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22). Because the Moon is opposite your sign today, you will have to go more than halfway dealing with others. Don't worry. In two weeks, people will have to go more than halfway dealing with you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21). You have an urge to get better organized today. Financially, this is a good day to shop. It's a better day to put money and get things in the mail.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21). You're in a good day for shopping. Don't make your purchases.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19). Your thoughts are on money, security and domestic matters today. Discussions with family members might take a surprising turn. Stay focused on the issues, avoid irrelevant distractions.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18). You're in a busy day with errands, short trips and possibly shopping. Actually, it's a good day for shopping. Don't make your purchases.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20). Discrepancies between your checkbook and financial statements today. You haven't captured all the facts. This is not a good day for investments.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

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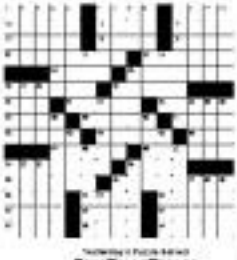

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CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dan Cross

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				9				
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4			6		7			2
	3						5	
9			1		3			8
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		1	4		9	2		

Hello, Level ★★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
For strategies go to www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

7	2	5	5	4	8	1	3	6
4	6	1	2	3	7	9	8	5
3	9	8	1	9	6	4	7	2
8	5	9	7	8	2	3	4	1
1	8	4	3	1	9	5	6	7
6	7	3	4	5	5	2	9	8
5	4	9	6	7	1	8	2	3
9	3	7	5	2	4	6	1	9
2	1	6	9	6	3	7	5	4

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*Accumulable charge slips worth P8,000 with minimum amount of P2,000 per charge slip

FREE P500 GC
at P12,000* spend

*Accumulable charge slips worth P12,000 with minimum amount of P3,000 per charge slip

FREE P1,000 WORTH OF GAS
at P25,000* spend
TECHRON

*Accumulable charge slips worth P25,000 with minimum amount of P5,000 per charge slip

We find ways

HOSTESS Sarah Ferguson and Martin Moberly, journalist Margaret Gardiner, Filipino designer Oliver Tolentino and TV talk-show host Jennifer Go.

MICHAEL C. Hall, Globe Best Actor TV Drama Series, with wife Jennifer Carpenter

A meaningful win for Michael C. Hall

LOS ANGELES—MICHAEL C. HALL, WHO recently announced that he is successfully battling cancer, did the rounds of the after parties on Sunday's Golden Globe awards. Clutching his statuette for Best Actor TV Drama Series, the star of the acclaimed "Dexter" series celebrated his first ever Globe win on this significant time in his life.

At his wife and "Dexter" co-star Jennifer Carpenter proudly stood by. Hubbard posed for photos with glamour one of the parties that he attended. Followed the 67th Golden Globe Awards. Earlier, Jennifer was misty-eyed when Michael made his acceptance speech, especially when he thanked his "females all my love and gratitude," the actor remarked.

Michael revealed that he has Hodgkin's lymphoma a few days before the Golden Globes. Backstage at the Beverly Hilton Hotel, the 38-year-old actor explained: "My health is very much a personal matter. I had every intention of keeping it quiet but because the awards shows were imminent, I figured that I had to make a statement. It was also nice to be able to make the statement at this point in my treatment where I was able to attend people that I

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Rubeen V. Nepomuceno

were really on the road to recovery."

Michael, who wore a black Japanese hat to cover the effects of his cancer treatment, quipped when asked about this "head accessory-of-choice": "I wanted something that was pretty simple but maybe fancier than your normal thing. I found this Japanese hat. It is actually really long but I got the woman who helped Jennifer with her dress to untangle it."

Rain-soaked couple

Michael and Jennifer were among the many stars who walked the rain-soaked red carpet last Sunday afternoon. For the first time in many years, rain fell on the Golden Globe red carpet parade which usually takes place in typically sunny LA weather.

If you think that rain is the great equalizer in Hollywood, you're wrong. The publicists held umbrellas over their respective clients. They quickly learned the way to hold the umbrellas over their A-list clients: hold them very high while keeping distance from the stars. Because if the publicists didn't connect their bodies that way, they will be seen in the photos, too. But Penelope Cruz curbed the umbrella herself like a true Spanish soldado and gloriously twirled the brolly as if it was really meant to go with her gown. Sandra Georgia forwarded her gown.

For a few lucky women, their husbands or boyfriends gallantly held the umbrellas. Those were the gentlemen of the afternoon: Paul McCartney (for girlfriend Nancy Shevell), Harrison Ford (Calista Flockhart), George Clooney (Elizabeth Canalis), Jesse James (Sandra Bullock), Arlen Kravitz (Emily Blunt), Nick Cannon (Mariah Carey, who learns how to walk the red carpet, no matter how dreaded it was), Joshua Jackson (Diane Kruger), Josh Duhamel (Fergie), and Jeff Bridges (Susan Geston).

From our vantage point on the red carpet where we helped dear the stairs for security, we

JULIA Roberts flashes her famous smile for the photographers outside her hotel.

observed a snippy attitude or two because of the rains. But overall, the wet weather resulted in a jovial atmosphere as the stars simply laughed off the two from the hours to positively unconcerning TV show personality Billy Bush and his tube to a till photographer who snapped them on their wades for a quick shot.

We saw why Julia Roberts is still America's Sweetheart to this day. Hearing the soaked fans in the bleachers yelling "Julia! Julia!" she stopped away from the mass of umbrellas surrounding her, walked in front of the bleachers stand, waved and thanked the fanatics cheering wells to the grateful wet folks. Your thatt's a true star.

Before all that water could completely ruin on into a Chia Pet Johny we heard that from Sandra Bullock when she was asked what would happen to her hair if it got wet from the rains. Her response: "I'm not going to be in part with hit umbrella in he was entering the security taken/El shark line. Taking pity on our wet puppy look, he gave it to us. Later, he came back and asked for the umbrella because he needed it for "home" director James Cameron who was arriving in his limo. Fellowsnaily, we gave back the umbrella. Who would deny the Ring of the World his umbrella?

Fair weather

If anything, the downpour eased our problem of getting the stars into the ballrooms by the 5 p.m. show time. In the past, it was a struggle to keep stars from lingering in front of the hyper photographers. This time, the wet weather kept the A-listers moving at a faster pace.

Among the familiar faces on the red carpet were Filipino Martin Huberty, fresh from the Prime Golden Legends class reunion in the Philippines and who came with Sarah Ferguson, the Duchess of York; our guests, Filipino designer Oliver Tolentino (we escorted the starts to his runway and his business manager Andrew Cornelio); "Kabuhayan: UP TV show host Jennielle Sy and her fiancé, businessman Jeff Lim; Filipino-American Symphony Orchestra Direct co-founder Roger and Gina Ortiz, also the couple behind the Asian Journal Noontimers.

Jennielle, Margaret Gardiner, a journalist and the first Miss Universe from South Africa, and our table, Jessie, were joined by Oliver. All throughout the evening, the three ladies drew admiring comments on their gowns and the intricate gowns. "Who are you wearing?"

Tomorrow, the spotlights continue inside the ballrooms and the after-parties.

Email the columnist at rvnepomuceno@yahoo.com and read his blog, "The Hopeless Romantic," at http://blogs.inquirer.net/hopelessromantic.

LIVING Stars

Editor Bronie G. Velarde
Email: entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

JOJO and Clara Oconer, on the day they were "wrenched into success." The bridal gown was inspired by a vintage Vivienne Westwood that she earlier saw online.

Lavender and lace

Clara on cloud nine on her wedding day

By Rommel San Diego Jr.
Inquirer Lifestyle Features Editor

DAYS BEFORE THE Big Day on Jan. 17, singer-actress Clara Sunio was crowding her Twitter account with excruciating posts.

At last she understood what brides must feel: intoxicated excitement, dizzying nervousness, dreadful boredom.

She wrote: "So excited ... but also getting frustrated because of all the expenses for just one day!"

Still, last Sunday, Clara was the picture of pure bliss when she tied the knot with Jojo Oconer, chief operating officer of Tape and ABS-CBN Entertainment, producer of "Rat Race" and "Rated K."

A few days before, she wrested about a divorce because they had planned a garden wedding at the Manila Polo Club.

"I was super stressed. I've always wanted a garden setting. It's natural. It's more practical because you don't have to torture up the venue that

LAVENDER 11

FAMOUS couple: Sharon Cuneta

SIDE: Tito Sotto, Helen Gamboa, Vic Sotto and Malou Choa-Fagar

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MOVIEWORLD

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GALLERIA

1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
2 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
3 AVATAR
4 OLD DOGS
5 THE SPY NEXT DOOR
6 AVATAR (Digital 3D)
7 InSector PEREL
8 SAGRADA FAMILIA
9 THE IMAGINARIUM OF DR. PARNASSUS
10 DAYBREAKERS

MANILA

1 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
2 SHERLOCK HOLMES
3 THE IMAGINARIUM OF DR. PARNASSUS
4 OLD DOGS
5 THE SPY NEXT DOOR
6 AVATAR
7 SAGRADA FAMILIA

METRO EAST

1 THE REBOUND
2 THE IMAGINARIUM OF DR. PARNASSUS
3 OLD DOGS
4 THE SPY NEXT DOOR
5 DAYBREAKERS
6 AVATAR
7 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
8 SAGRADA FAMILIA

MOVALICHES

1 AVATAR
2 THE IMAGINARIUM OF DR. PARNASSUS
3 THE IMAGINARIUM OF DR. PARNASSUS
4 THE SPY NEXT DOOR

FORUM ROBINSONS

1 THE SPY NEXT DOOR
2 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
3 OLD DOGS
4 THE IMAGINARIUM OF DR. PARNASSUS

SHOWING on January 27

MOVIEWORLD

STA. ROSA

1 AVATAR
2 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
3 OLD DOGS
4 THE SPY NEXT DOOR

LIPA

1 SHERLOCK HOLMES
2 AVATAR
3 THE SPY NEXT DOOR
4 ZOMBIELAND

DASMARIÑAS

1 ANG PAGIBIG
2 OLD DOGS
3 THE SPY NEXT DOOR
4 I LOVE YOU, GOODBYE

STARMILLE

1 THE SPY NEXT DOOR
2 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
3 AVATAR
4 SHERLOCK HOLMES
5 OLD DOGS
6 I LOVE YOU, GOODBYE

IMUS

1 AVATAR
2 OLD DOGS
3 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
4 THE SPY NEXT DOOR

ANGELES

1 THE SPY NEXT DOOR
2 OLD DOGS
3 SHERLOCK HOLMES
4 NOT FORGOTTEN

TACLOBAN

1 AVATAR
2 ZOMBIELAND
3 OLD DOGS

DUMAGUETE

1 AVATAR
2 THE REBOUND
3 UNIVERSAL SOLDIER: REGENERATION

BACOLOD

1 AVATAR
2 OLD DOGS
3 SHERLOCK HOLMES
4 THE SPY NEXT DOOR
5 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
6 SAGRADA FAMILIA

ILOILO

1 AVATAR
2 OLD DOGS
3 SHERLOCK HOLMES
4 THE SPY NEXT DOOR
5 UNIVERSAL SOLDIER: REGENERATION
6 SAGRADA FAMILIA

GENSAN

1 THE SPY NEXT DOOR
2 ZOMBIELAND
3 THE REBOUND
4 AVATAR

ILOCOS NORTE (NOW OPEN!)

1 THE SPY NEXT DOOR
2 THE REBOUND
3 AVATAR

R-13 STRICTLY SPEAKING

MEET and GREET the cast

Robinsons Movieworld Galleria
Cinema Lobby

Lavender and lace

From page F1

much," she told Inquirer Entertainment.

Fortunately, the skies cleared on the day itself.

He got everything she prayed for and more. "It's worth all the tension. I'm an ebullient. It's an overwhelming feeling."

For starters, her wedding gown, by friend Mich Dulce, was just as she envisioned it.

"It's vintage, inspired by a Vivienne Westwood dress I saw on the 'net. It was worn by the British editor of Harper's Bazaar," she said.

Although people thought she'd conjure down the aisle in a lavender gown, she still donned traditional white. "But the accessories is in violet, my favorite color."

Friends collaborated to make her wedding day extra special. Her hair was done by Cosmo Torres, her makeup by Lois Flores.

Music was provided by the UST Symphony Orchestra, led by Jerome Ramos, the bride's former teacher at the UST conservatory.

Pastor Bernard Stamper officiated the Christian ceremony.

Of course, Claire's cousin Sharon Cuneta and her (Shawcutt) daughters KC, Frankie and Miel, were part of the entourage.

The bride's parents Tito Sotto and Helen Gamboa, along with Jojo's parents Cecilia and Joe Grosser, led the revelry at the reception, also at the Manila Polo Club that evening.

A day before the ceremony, Claire wrote in her Twitter space: "Tomorrow ... my last name will change." She would later confess that she still wasn't used to the new surname, but that "Mrs. G" had a pleasant ring to it.

E-mail: bazaarandbeyond@inquirer.com

HECTOR Layron and Lala Sotto

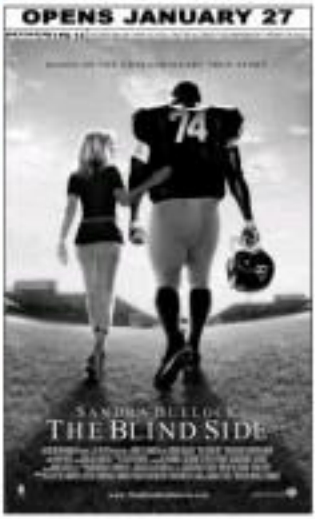
Edwin Zuzuarregui

HENRI Sotto Genovesi and Frannie Pangilinan

JOLINA MAGDANGAL

MY NEW Yorkie-Chihuahua Mini-Pinsy was a gift from Jiko Gleb 7 about "Showbiz Central." The staff felt sad for me when my old pet Cosmo passed away last year. Shung Weng, now 7 months old, has no hair both like a baby and always is a small Pepperwave contender in the kitchen. I've already taught him to shake paws/hands with me...Beyond Text Diger Ar

OPENS JANUARY 27



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2 LEGION
1:10, 4:00, 6:40, 9:30
3 OLD DOGS
12:00, 2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 9:40
4 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS
UP 2:10, 4:20
SHERLOCK HOLMES
11:30, 9:30
SPY NEXT DOOR
1:30, 4:00, 6:40, 9:10

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THEATRE

1 I LOVE YOU, GOODBYE PG-13
2 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS
3 DAYBREAKERS R-18
4 SHERLOCK HOLMES PG-13
5 THE IMAGINARIUM of DOCTOR PARNASSUS PG-13
6 TOOTHFAIRY
7 THE SPY NEXT DOOR PG-13
8 OLD DOGS
9 LEGION
10 AVATAR (3D)

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

JACKIE CHAN
THE SPY NEXT DOOR
BABYSITTER BY DAY. SECRET AGENT BY NIGHT.
PG-13
NOW PLAYING

PG-13
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PILLOW TALK
TV personality Euphrosenia Glutas-Pueo clears off her new line of bed fashion, Linsens Dimon: "I am partial to the classic styles, with accents that are young and fresh. We spend a third of our lives in bed, so it is very important to feel pampered [in this aspect]."

Glaiza de Castro: Simple, practical

By Nestrel S. Cruz
Photos by Jim Cobio/Pancakes

YOUNG ACTRESS GLAIZA DE Castro, who was part of the now-defunct sitcom/ye "Stairway to Heaven," said her exit as the schoolgirl Bonbon helped her rediscover herself.

"Doing Bonbon pushed me to the limit. I don't have a mean bone in my body, but Bonbon forced me to unearth mixed-bag people," Glaiza told Young Stars.

While Bonbon has a penchant for expensive clothes and bags, Glaiza keeps things simple. "I'm a minimalist," said Glaiza, who will soon be seen in GMA-7's "Dyesebel." "I don't buy things just to match people's aspirations, or because they are cute. I buy things that are useful."

Glaiza added: "I believe that clothes should reflect the wearer's personality. I don't wear something just because it's fashionable."

GLAIZA prefers scents that aren't too strong, just like Fuerbe Liberty Dkwt

Dresses

These are from my designer friend Mei Mendiog. I wore this green halter dress with red heels to a photo shoot for a slimming center Jean Garcia, who, like me, is managed by Direk Manny Valera, wore the exact same dress in a pictorial. The white dress has almost the same style and cut. I wore it in a pictorial for "ELM."

The knitted red top I wore for the music video of Pupil's "Disconnection Notice" I was doing the TV show "Pakitot" when director Quark Henares asked if I was interested in doing the music video. All the band needs are just to voice-search it.

Accessories

This hat (stones from abroad) was the only thing I managed to buy on my first trip to Boracay in February last year. I was with Jessica Garcia and Isabel Oli. We had a lot of girl bonding there.

I used this brown-and-white textured scarf in my first pictorial for "Stairway to Heaven." It's memorable because the dress had a big impact on me as an actor.

I'm a minimalist. I never overaccessorize. I put on large earrings or a designer necklace, and that's it. My favorite watch is a Swatch; I used to collect Baby Gs, but I lost most of them.

Bags

I'm not a big person; I have just a body bag to carry my cell phone and money. This Dooney & Burke purse was a gift from a very special aunt in the United States. She gave me this when she came home to visit.

I'm not the type who changes bags often. I like this Ipiny basic leather) bag because it's the perfect size. If I spend money on a bag, it's because it's useful.

Memorabilia

My CD "Legends" by Velvet Underground is a birthday present from my friend Marco del Castillo. I used one of the band's songs as an audition piece for the movie "Rakestraight." Direk Quark said it was one of the reasons he got me for the movie.

My favorite film is Terry Gilliam's "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas." It stars Johnny Depp and features Del Toro, one of my favorite actors. I have around a DVD copy from a friend and watched it every night for a week. Recently I bought my own copy.

My favorite book (**On the Road: The Original Scroll**) is by Jack Kerouac. The adventure-route most of his adventures during his travels in a scroll. Like the people in the book, I refuse to conform to a certain norm or culture. I'm always searching for something new.

This stuffed teddy bear that my mom gave me was Christmas ago comes with a really comfy blanket. I bring them to outings because I get cold easily.

Gadgets

I (Nokia) Maemo (Maemo) gave Blackberry phones to me and my friend Lucienne Nick Amurao. She didn't want us to pay for them, but we insisted that we would, once we get the money. She's like that, generous even parents' hand. I'm starting to enjoy BBM (Blackberry messenger) with my new phone.

I never leave home without my iPod. It's perfect for long drives. On my play list right now are songs by Mayonnaise, the reggae musicians. I like his songs because they're all positive, they uplift the spirit.

My DSLR (digital single lens reflex) camera is a Nikon D40. I love taking pictures. I used to borrow my sister's camera a lot. Now that I have my own, I plan to make photography a hobby.

Shoes

I'm a fan of Chuck Taylor and Vans rubber shoes. It's only recently that I began to appreciate girly flat shoes. I wear high-heeled shoes only for work. As soon as I can take them off, I replace them with slippers. Recently, Marian Rivera (Ding) and I were hosts at the same show. Ding-ding. It's fun doing that with them.

THE STUFFED teddy bear that Glaiza's sister gifted her two years ago comes with a blanket.

(Clockwise from left) Her iPod, Blackberry phone, a gift from friend Maemo Magalong, and her Nikon D40

A CD of Velvet Underground and a DVD copy of "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas."

KNITTED red top that Glaiza wore on the music video of Pupil's "Disconnection Notice"

Scents

Elder Pearl for Life by Ebesel. I also use Cheeks by Bulgari and Gold Wave. If I feel like using fruity scents, I use Jean Body Shops. I don't like my perfumes and colognes too strong.

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